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TRUTH AND TRUST.

By
William Chambers.

BOSTON:
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59 WASHINGTON STREET.
1848.

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DEAR YOUNG FRIENDS,

The present volume consists of two stories, which I offer for your amusement and benefit. They differ considerably from each other, yet they have the same object in view —the inculcation of TRUTH with a TRUSTFUL reliance on its value. The principal character in the first story is JERVIS RYLAND, and in the second, VICTOR JARNAC. When you have read the volume, you will be able to say which of the two characters you most approve of, and would prefer to imitate.

W. C.

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JERVIS RYLAND.

JERVIS RYLAND.

One fine summer day, on a pleasant green lawn fronting Elm-Tree Hall, in Hampshire, two children were amusing themselves. They were orphans — Edward and Annie Percy — whose parents had lately died in the north of England; and being adopted by their kind relations, Mr and Mrs Davenport, they were now living happily at Elm-Tree Hall.

Edward and Annie Percy were not the only objects of Mr and Mrs Davenport's benevolence. Not having any children of their own, these good people had received into their house some years before a little boy named Jervis Ryland, whom they had clothed and educated, and treated with the greatest affection. Jervis had no claims on them on account of relationship.

He was the orphan child of a person whom Mr Davenport had known and respected in business. At his father's death, he was left without friends or any means of living, and it was only through Mr Davenport's compassion that he was saved from being sent to the parish workhouse.

When the little Percys came to live at the Hall, it was Mr Davenport's wish that they should grow up with Jervis Ryland as if he were their brother. He did not wish to show favour to one more than another, but to be equally attentive to all. At the time that our story begins, neither he nor Mrs Davenport knew much of the character or disposition of Edward and Annie, for they had formerly lived at a great distance from Hampshire; but it was believed that they had been well brought up, and had had a good example set them by their parents.

The way that Edward and Annie were amusing themselves on the lawn was this: Annie was employed with her needle, having taken her workbox and working materials to a garden seat, which was placed beneath a weeping ash; and while she was busy in making a doll's frock,

which she expected would prove more than usually becoming, Edward was engaged in arranging the tail of a kite, which was to be I do not know how many yards long. For this purpose Mr Davenport had given him a hatful of nice clean waste paper.

"I wish Jervis had come out with us," said Edward. "I cannot think how he has so many more lessons to learn than usual to-day."

"I daresay he will come out presently; it would be wrong to disturb him you know," replied Annie, who was a gentle girl, and never thought ill of any one.

Annie was quite right not to entertain evil thoughts of her companions; but this need not prevent us from telling our readers what sort of a boy Jervis Ryland was. Jervis, unfortunately, had not had a careful mother, and his father had always been too much occupied in business to teach him anything. He was left to pick up bad habits from people about him. In particular, he had learned to pay little respect to truth; but as he was also cunning and artful, his disposition to tell falsehoods had never been discovered by Mr or Mrs Davenport. They indeed believed him to be a truthful and clever

boy, who would one day make a good figure in the world.

Jervis, as an excuse, had told his young companions that he could not go out to play on the lawn just at that time, on account of having to learn a long lesson for school next day. He was, however, very differently employed from learning lessons. The children had been forbidden to enter Mr Davenport's study without his express leave; for there were generally chemical apparatus in that room, which it would have been dangerous for them to touch. There were also papers and letters of importance on the table, which it would have been mischievous to disarrange.

Besides all these things, the study contained a portfolio of beautiful prints, which Jervis had only been once allowed to peep into; and he was very anxious to have the pleasure of turning over and looking at so many fine engravings. The best and proper way to have seen the prints would have been to ask permission from Mr Davenport to show them at some convenient opportunity. Jervis, however, did not wait to try this plan of satisfying his curiosity; he thought only of his immediate gratification.

"Mr and Mrs Davenport are out," thought he to himself; "nobody is at hand to see what I do. I will go into the study and have a nice treat in looking over that splendid portfolio of pictures. I am sure I shall not injure them, and who will know anything about it?"

What a little artful creature! No human eye might see him; but the eye of One who slumbers not nor sleeps was acquainted with all his ways!

And so Jervis, in opposition to all warnings, entered the study. The terrible silence of the place at first made him a little afraid; but gathering courage, he sought out the portfolio, which lay on a side-table, and took it to a chair near the window, for the purpose of looking it over. Yet he trembled almost at the sound of his own breath—turned over the leaves with a shaking hand—and somehow or other did not really enjoy the pictures of which he was so fond half as much as he expected to do. Forbidden pleasures always have some bitterness, however sweet they may seem in expectation.

Now the window near which he was standing was partly open, and overlooked the lawn on

which Edward was amusing himself with his kite; but Jervis contrived to stand a little aside, so as not to be observed by either Edward or his sister. Beyond the trees that skirted one side of the lawn there was some one working; but this person was only a boy, called Luke Jones, who was occasionally employed about the stable and kitchen-garden, and he did not appear to be within sight of Jervis.

As there seemed nothing to fear, Jervis continued turning over the prints, and examining them all one by one till the end. Growing bolder as he proceeded, he felt sure he should never be found out; and content with his half-hour's amusement, he was just about to close the portfolio, when a sudden gust of wind entered the room and carried out of the window a strip of thin paper which lay on the last of the prints. This was a startling occurrence, and altogether unexpected. All that Jervis had observed was, that the paper was of small size, and written upon. What kind of paper could it be?

This accident perplexed Jervis the more he thought of it: he would gladly have gone out to seek for and pick up the missing paper if he

dared. Unfortunately for him, he heard a servant in the next room, so that he could not quit the study without a discovery of his disobedience. For the same reason he dared not call out of the window to Annie or Edward to recover the paper, which, by a glance, he saw was fluttering about on the grass.

It was a striking example of the well-known fact, that one act of deception leads to many other faults. The first step which points in a wrong direction, if not promptly withdrawn, can lead only the farther wrong. At this moment there was only one way for Jervis to get out of his scrape, and at the same time recover the stray paper. That would have been to show himself, and afterwards make confession of his error to Mr Davenport, seeking forgiveness for his disobedience.

But Jervis had not the good sense and proper feeling to do anything of the kind. At first he tried to think that the paper was most likely of little or no consequence. He also hoped that it would not be missed; although, when he remembered Mr Davenport's great exactness and love of order, he could not but tremble at the fear of discovery. With some degree of haste,

he now arranged the prints as neatly as possible in the way they lay before; and having put the portfolio in its place, he waited an opportunity to quit the study unobserved.

While listening for a moment, he heard the merry laugh of little Annie, who was amused at the length of the kite's tail, which Edward had just completed, and was holding one end, and running with her brother across the lawn to help to fly it.

"Oh, stay," said Edward, "it shall be a little longer yet. Here is one of the pieces of paper which flew away when that gust of wind came suddenly across the lawn." So saying, Edward seized the strip of paper which lay fluttering at his feet, of course never imagining that it was the piece which Jervis had lost from the window. Believing it to be one of his own pieces, he accordingly tacked it to the tail of the kite, which, with great joy, he now raised into the atmosphere; and as the wind blew a fresh and steady breeze, the kite was speedily soaring high in the air.

Jervis beheld the whole scene from the window. An evil temptation entered his heart, which he had scarcely the inclination, and not

the strength, to resist. His determination was instantly formed to throw the whole blame on the innocent Edward if the lost paper should be missed. He fancied that he should certainly be able to establish the guilt of the poor boy, by proving that the paper was employed in the making of the kite's tail!

We shall see by and by how this trick succeeded.

On the following morning, while the children were yet employed at their lessons, Mr Davenport entered the room. He had discovered the loss of the paper, and much concerned for its disappearance, he bore a grave expression of countenance.

"I wish to ask you, my dears," said he, "if any of you disobeyed my orders in our absence yesterday?"

Jervis began to feel very uncomfortable at this address, but remained, with the others, silent, while Mr Davenport went on—

"Because I hope, if, contrary to my wish, you entered the study, you will not add to your fault by denying it. So tell me the truth." Here Mr Davenport cast a firm look on the faces of the three children, which made at least one of them quake.

"No indeed, sir," exclaimed Edward and his sister almost at the same moment. "Indeed, sir, we were in the garden the whole time you were away."

"And I was here writing out my exercises, I assure you," said Jervis, endeavouring to assume the tone of innocence which belonged naturally to his young companions. So conscious was he, however, of uttering a falsehood, that he did not dare to look up while he spoke.

"You are quite sure?" repeated Mr Davenport.

"Indeed, sir, we are," replied Edward and Annie as before.

"And so am I," added Jervis, who was now fairly committed to a line of error, and resolved on denying everything.

"Then I must question the servants," said Mr Davenport; and accordingly every domestic in the household was examined. We cannot tell

what Jervis felt when he saw the number of persons who incurred the shame and pain of suspicion in consequence of his fault. If he had not been considerably hardened, he would surely not have endured the spectacle which followed without owning his guilt.

Of course the innocent servants strongly denied that they had ever touched the portfolio. Their master stated that a very valuable paper, which had been put among the prints, was missing. How it had disappeared he could not tell; but he was certain that he saw it in the morning before going out, and that it was gone when he went to look for it. All the servants felt sorry for its loss, and declared they would look about everywhere for it. This was so far consoling; but in the meantime the paper was gone, and it was a great distress for Mr Davenport to suspect that there was dishonesty somewhere in his dwelling.

"That there is some culprit in the house, I must believe," said he, after a short pause; "but I will not be so unjust as to condemn all for one. At the same time, for the security of my property, I must keep a stricter watch over it than I have hitherto done, until circum-

stances bring the offender to light, or, what I yet more truly hope may be the case, his own conscience prompts him to make the only reparation in his power—an open confession."

It is hardly necessary to say that all this was painful to the honest servants, many of whom had lived for years in the house, and had never before been suspected of doing anything wrong. None of them knew who was the party in fault; and this ignorance threw an air of gloom and doubt over the household. All resolved to try to discover the culprit, for the sake of clearing their own character.

We may now inform the reader what sort of a document had been lost. It was the memorandum of a chemical experiment which had been made by a poor German. The Germans are a thoughtful people, who have made many useful discoveries in the arts, by which the rest of the world has been benefited. In many cases the Germans who come to England are in poor circumstances, and they sometimes endeavour to get a wealthy and respectable man of science to help them in bringing their discoveries before the world. Such was now the case of Herman

Müller, a native of Dresden. He had been bred a dyer in his own country, and he now came to England in the hope of bettering his circumstances. In the course of his investigations, he had made an important discovery in the art of dyeing a rich cobalt blue, for which he was desirous to get a patent; and for this purpose he had solicited the assistance of Mr Davenport, a gentleman who often helped poor persons in such circumstances.

The memorandum describing the process of making the dye-stuff had been given to Mr Davenport to consider, and if necessary to test by experiment. He had already looked it over, and was preparing to make the required experiment, when he heard that the German was dead. The poor man had died suddenly in London, bequeathing as his sole legacy to his widow the secret of dyeing the cobalt blue, for which he hoped she would, with Mr Davenport's assistance, receive a proper compensation. The memorandum describing the process of manufacture was written in the German language, and was accompanied by a declaration of its accuracy, signed by its discoverer. Thus it was a more valuable document than any copy could have

been, had such been taken. And the poor widow, bowed down with misfortunes, looked to Mr Davenport as her sole hope in making her husband's discovery available — that discovery which had worn out his existence. The paper she deemed to be perfectly safe in his hands.

The night which succeeded was not passed pleasantly by young Ryland. He was restless and unhappy, as those who commit a moral wrong usually are. "There is *no* peace for the wicked." In the morning, he rose and walked out before breakfast. Perhaps he hoped to see some companions with whom he might play a game at marbles.

"Holloa, holloa, Master Jervis! I say, Master Jervis, will you stop a moment?" was heard by him as he turned down a lane to the right of Elm-Tree Hall.

Jervis stopped and looked back. A boy was running almost out of breath after him, and

soon came up. It was Luke Jones, the village boy who now and then did small pieces of work for Mr Davenport's groom and gardener, and to whom we have already alluded as being on the premises the day the fatal paper was blown out at the window.

"What a hurry you are in!" said Luke. "I wished to have a little talk with you."

"I am not in a hurry; only I don't know what you can have to say to me," replied Jervis.

Luke winked knowingly with one eye, and gave a mysterious shake of the head.

Jervis felt curiously all over. The guilty are always suspicious. But on reflecting for a moment, he could not perceive how the wink or shake of the head could have any relation to the late troublesome affair; and he affected to be angry.

"Why, what in all the world do you mean? Speak out, man, or it will be the worse for you!".

Luke burst into a laugh.

"Hear the little puppy! how he pretends to think I don't know all about it!"

"Know about what?"

"The lost bit of paper;" and the boy gave such a look!

Jervis first grew red as crimson in the face, and then pale. His heart beat quickly. He scarcely knew what to say or do. Cunning at length suggested audacity, or at least prudence. He might perhaps tamper with Luke, and secure his silence.

"Why, Luke, if you know anything about the lost paper, it is more than I do; and I don't see what right I have to be troubled about it."

Luke again laughed heartily; but his laugh ended in a low chuckle; and coming up close to Jervis's ear, he whispered the unexpected disclosure—"I was in the shrubbery picking the boxwood when you were in master's study. Through a little bit of an opening among the trees I saw the piece of paper blown away, and I saw *you* too! Aha! you did not know that I can tell all about it. Now say if you have not a right to be spoken to, and to be civil to me, my young master?"

Jervis was instantly abashed. And how low did he sink in his own respect! He was humbled by a stable-boy, whom he despised—

a meet reward, so far, for having departed from the paths of integrity. A feeling came over him that he should run back to the house and tell all. But pride—oh what miseries are caused by foolish pride!—unfortunately checked this too feeble emotion, and once more he resolved to go on in his deceit. We have no doubt, too, that Jervis was a thorough coward; as indeed liars always are. Wanting the courage to speak the truth at first, and meet a deserved rebuke, they add falsehood to falsehood, not thinking that each one must make detection in the end more sure, and their punishment all the more severe.

Overcome with the sense of his situation, and now dreading more than ever the consequences of his delinquency, Jervis perceived that Luke must be conciliated at all hazards! What fresh departures from truth did that resolution involve!

"Well, my good Luke"—Jervis called him the *good* Luke, now that he was afraid of him—"well, my good Luke, I see it's no use keeping up the hoax with you. Nobody knows anything about it but ourselves, and I hope you will keep out of the way. You know I can befriend you."

Luke grinned jocosely, and then whistled a tune.

"I am sure," continued Jervis, "you will have more sense than to say a word about what you saw. I will do as much for you some other time."

"Don't give no credit, Master Jervis, as the chandler always tells mother. If you want me to hold my tongue, you must pay me for it. Down at once with the twopences. That's flat anyhow."

"Why, Luke, as to *paying*, I have no objection—not I: but where am I to get money to pay you with? All my pocket money is at present gone. If you would wait till next week, I could promise you—let me see, yes, I think I could give you threepence."

"Wont wait nohow—that is, more than a day or so. You see I have as good as bought a pair of rabbits, nice silver grays, from Mr Simms the poulterer up by yonder; they are to be sixpence, money down; and I am to take them to-morrow. So you see if you can find me a good white sixpence by to-morrow morning at this time, all well and good; I don't say anything of the paper, though all the ser-

vants are at their wits' end about it. Do you say—*done?* Come, I say, speak!"

In the agony and hurry of the moment Jervis promised. He promised to meet Luke next morning and give him sixpence, though where he was to find the money he could not tell. There was, however, no time for reflection. The bell rung for breakfast, and Jervis hurried away to the house. You may be sure he ate very little that morning.

In the course of the day a foreign lady, rather poorly dressed, along with her daughter, came to the Hall. They had just arrived at the village by the stage-coach from London; and having sought out the house of Mr Davenport, they now waited upon him. It was Madame Müller and her orphan child.

The strangers were invited into the parlour. They could speak very little English, and no one except Mr and Mrs Davenport could converse in German. What they said, therefore,

was not understood. All that could be known was, that the lady had come about the memorandum which was now lost. Her demonstrations of grief on learning the fate of the paper were affecting, though made in a foreign language. Her eloquence caused Annie and Edward to weep for very sympathy. Jervis sat in a corner, to all appearance minding his book; but he was touched too; and unless for pride, and shame, and fear, he would now, more than ever, have told where the missing paper had gone.

Mr Davenport was distressed. He felt that he was responsible for the safety of the paper; and stated that he considered himself bound to make good the loss as far as was in his power. Meanwhile, till some light could be thrown on the affair, Madame Müller and her little girl were to be lodged in a room in the village.

When again left to themselves, and the storm of vexation was over, Jervis thought over various plans for fixing the blame on Edward. "I can say that I believe Edward has tied the piece of paper to the tail of his kite. No, that wont do; for I shall be asked how I know that. Let me

see. Shall I go and take off the paper, and throw it down somewhere? No, that will not do either; for the paper will be all rumpled, and then there will be inquiries about that. I must wait a little. Edward will go out to fly his kite, and then I can see the paper by accident. Yes, that will do!"

With this wicked plan in his head, Jervis went out to the fields. He wished to perfect his scheme of deceit. Another thing gave him concern—Where and how was he to procure sixpence to bribe Luke Jones? "What a fool I was to promise Luke sixpence! I must try to worry him out of it by fair or foul means to-morrow, that's certain."

As Jervis had these ideas running through his mind, he entered the parish churchyard, which was situated at a turn of the road near the main street of the village. His reason for going through the churchyard was to look at a blackbird's nest which he had discovered in an old yew-tree not far from the door of the church.

Jervis climbed stealthily up the tree, for he wished not to disturb the young birds, but only to look in upon them in their nest. When he

had climbed to the proper height, he fixed himself firmly on a bough, and sat for a time quietly looking into the nest, and counting how many young it contained.

The day was very warm. The sun shone intensely down, and few persons were moving about. The churchyard was silent. At length Jervis heard footsteps; and looking down, he observed Mr and Mrs Davenport—who had come out for the purpose of visiting a poor woman in the village—pass along to the wicket on the opposite side of the burying-ground. As they crossed beneath the aged yew, both stood still for a moment and spoke a few words. Their attention was drawn to the porch of the church, within the shade of which sat, in a reclining posture, a poor Savoyard boy asleep. It was curious Jervis had not noticed this boy when he ascended the tree, and he now was interested in what took place.

Mr Davenport was for passing on, after noticing that the boy was only asleep; but his lady felt compassion for the poor stranger. He was travelling with a white mouse in a little wire cage which lay beside him, and he held a small monkey by means of a cord fixed to a

button-hole in his jacket. The monkey was not very lively; perhaps it was hungry. It sat in a cowering position in a corner between the boy and the wall. The Savoyard's broad-brimmed hat had fallen off, and lay with the open part upwards at the side of its owner.

"I must give the poor creature something," said the kind-hearted lady. "He has travelled a long way, I daresay, and got nothing." And having made this observation, she dropped a sixpence into the hat of the little mendicant, and without awakening him, passed out of the churchyard with her husband.

Jervis saw all that occurred without moving; and he took a long breath, as if to smother some terrible idea that had come into his head. Could it be possible that he meditated the stealing of the poor boy's sixpence? Alas! how despicable, how vile are human thoughts, if left to the dominion of passion! For the sake of a miserable coin, Jervis Ryland contemplated the commission of a great crime—a crime against the law of man, but a deadly sin, a transgression of the law of God.

Jervis felt almost choked. He had never yet stolen anything. He had only been cunning

and deceitful on certain occasions, and told a few lies. Yes, he knew he was a liar. He never had meant to be so; but not having the resolution to withstand temptation, he had felt himself led on from one lie to another. Every falsehood he had uttered had required other falsehoods to prop it up; and thus he was entangled in a coil of deceit and hypocrisy. "Only one lie more," thought he, "and all will be well. I must also take this sixpence to give to Luke Jones, and that will stop *his* mouth. Pooh, it's only a sixpence I am taking!—nobody will know anything about it. So here goes." And he hastened stealthily and quickly down the tree.

We wish we could here stop our story. We wish we had not to relate that Jervis Ryland was a thief—a *thief* as well as a *liar*. Dear children, beware of the first approaches to vice. Confess all your errors; tell everything; conceal nothing, however bad it be against yourself. Trust to the kindness of parents for forgiveness. Trust to God: pray to Him to keep you out of sin. But oh, never, never bring your lips to utter an untruth—never put forth your hand to take what is not your own. Do

not be ranked with liars and thieves—beings despised by all, despised even by themselves.

Jervis repented not of his malicious design even when he came close to the sleeping and wayworn Savoyard. He stooped and picked up the sixpence from the open hat. As he lifted it, and was putting it in his pocket, the monkey grinned and chattered, and darted such a look with its small round eyes, which glanced in its head like diamonds, that Jervis was somewhat dismayed. He almost thought the monkey knew he was a thief, and he fled hastily from the spot. That fiery look of the monkey often haunted him during the night, and already he felt the tortures of conscious guilt.

With the bright beams of the morning, Jervis's feelings became tranquillised, and he was more at his ease. He gave the promised sixpence to Luke Jones. Luke now declared that all was right; and Jervis comforted himself with the reflection that this was a bad job well off his hands.

"Come, boys, is this not a fine day for flying your kite? I see the trees waving in the wind. I would advise you, Edward, not to lose any time."

So spoke Mr Davenport, who was always glad to see his young people amusing themselves in the open air when there was no cause for staying within doors. The proposal pleased all parties—Edward, because he was rather proud of his new kite; Annie, because she loved to see her brother happy; and Jervis, because—because what?—because it furthered his plan of making Edward appear to be the person who had taken the missing paper.

Edward ran for his kite, and Jervis ran to help him.

"Let me help you," said Jervis. "I will open out the long tail, and hold up the kite till the air catches it, while you keep good hold of the string, and make a short run to get it up."

"Thank you, Jervis," replied the good-natured

Edward; and the two boys began their operations on the lawn.

"Why, how badly you have done all this!" cried Jervis, who was only seeking an excuse to handle the tail of the kite. You have not tied the papers on tightly; some of them are quite loose; and what a bunch you have put at the lower end of the tail!"

"Pray don't alter it," said Edward. "Pray don't: the kite, I assure you, flies very well as it is."

"Oh, nonsense: look here; this is the way the thing should have been." And before the owner of the kite could prevent the mischief, the other had unfastened and removed some of the papers.

"Well, Edward—I do believe—I am almost sure, this is German!" exclaimed Jervis in feigned astonishment. "I should not a bit wonder if this is not the lost memorandum. How did you come by it? I should not like to be you for something." And the little hypocrite attempted to look very darkly and significantly on his companion.

"It cannot be the lost paper," replied Edward, not in the least discomposed by the dis-

covery, but still a little anxious. "It cannot be; there are no papers here except what Mr Davenport gave me; and he surely would not give me that which he prizes so highly to put to my kite's tail."

"We'll soon see that," said Jervis. "Let us take the paper to Mr Davenport and hear what he says."

"Of course, of course; let us go with all my heart. I have nothing to fear."

"Look here, sir," cried Jervis to Mr Davenport, rushing hurriedly into the parlour: "look if this be not the lost paper. I found it tacked to the tail of Edward's kite."

"And if it be the paper, I do not know how it got there," added Edward firmly.

"Oh you naughty boy!" said Mr Davenport to Edward after he had cast a glance at the paper. "It certainly is the memorandum of the German's discovery. Where did you get it? Tell me all?"

Edward turned pale from distress of mind, which gave him the appearance of guilt; and he could but clasp his hands and exclaim—"Indeed, indeed, sir, I only used the waste paper you gave me!"

"Do you think, you wicked boy, that I am so stupid as believe that I gave you a paper of so much importance? A paper I left in the portfolio, and from which, I suppose, you took it?"

"Oh no, no, sir. I can assure you I did not take the paper—I did not."

"I say, on the contrary, you must have taken it: there it was at the tail of your kite, and tied on by yourself, as far as I understand. I grieve to think you should add another falsehood to the many you have already uttered," said Mr Davenport sternly.

At this Edward burst into tears, beseeching him to send for Annie, who would confirm the truth of what he had said.

"I will question her, certainly," said Mr Davenport; "and I hope, if she have any knowledge of this dreadful affair, we shall get the truth from her."

Accordingly, Annie was sent for to the parlour where this scene was going on; and on seeing her dear brother, whom she loved very affectionately, weeping, she became greatly distressed, and ran to ask him what was the matter. Before he had time to reply to her question, Mr Davenport addressed her.

"You know, Annie, I have always been kind to you and your brother. Now I fear that you have both been behaving very naughtily, and making a very bad return for all I have done. You see this paper? It is the lost memorandum now found—found by Jervis tied to the tail of Edward's kite. Were not you with your brother when he made up the tail with bits of paper?"

"I was with him all that afternoon."

"Well, if so, you know how he got the German's memorandum. Did *he* take it from the portfolio?—did *you* take it? Speak the truth. I insist on it." And here Mr Davenport raised his voice angrily.

"No, sir, I am sure Edward did not take it; and I am as certain that I did not take it. Believe us both, good sir. If the paper was taken out of your study, it was not by us." The poor child could contain herself no longer; she burst into tears, and, along with Edward, wept bitterly.

Mr Davenport was puzzled; but on the whole he inclined to think that Edward and his sister were to blame. If they knew nothing as to how the paper was taken from the house, Ed-

ward at least must have known that he had used the missing document; and therefore he was guilty of not telling sooner where it was. So strong were appearances against them, that all in the house believed that they were the parties who were altogether in fault. How cruel for Jervis to have shifted the guilt from his own shoulders to those of his two innocent associates—poor orphan children, who had no one to defend them!

And now it is sad to tell of the sufferings of Edward and Annie. We do not mean to say that they were beaten, or starved, or locked up in their chambers, for Mr and Mrs Davenport were much opposed to these violent methods of punishment. But while the hearts of the young orphans were full of gratitude and affection towards their benefactors, they had to listen to those severe reproofs which they would so well have deserved had they been justly chargeable with the fault imputed to them. Then Mrs Davenport, who was deeply interested in the welfare of the two children, asked them *how* it had all happened; and when this intreaty only drew forth renewed protestations of their innocence, she turned away with grief, saying,

"Hush, hush; do not make matters worse by further denials."

As there was no direct evidence that the supposed culprits had really used the paper with a knowledge of its character, this conduct of Mr and Mrs Davenport was not just—it was unjust, as well as cruel; and we are sorry to have to condemn them for their rash suspicions. The very circumstance of the two orphans being dependent on them, should have caused them to act with tenderness. Oppression where there can be no resistance, is oppression doubly; and to trample on the fallen, is no part of true magnanimity. Like many worthy people, Mr and Mrs Davenport had so keen a sense of truth and uprightness, that they were apt to overlook the necessity for exercising *charity* and *mercy*—two qualities whose benign influence was never more required than at the present moment. Yet, on the other hand, it may be said that, with their firm conviction of the children's guilt, they perhaps thought they were only doing right in thus marking their sorrow and indignation.

The next day Madame Müller, the widow of the German, came to the Hall; and though her

joy was very great at hearing that the memorandum had been found, she could not conceal her indignation at the supposed authors of the calamity. When she was going away, Annie offered to assist her to put on her shawl; but the woman repulsed her so rudely, that she stumbled, and wellnigh hurt herself against the corner of a carved bookcase. This made Edward very angry; and he would have done some violence to the woman, if Annie had not clung to him, and told him never to mind.

"No, no, dear Edward; do not let us do evil, though we are wrongly judged. Be sure that some day the truth will be discovered; we must in the meantime submit."

Did not Jervis begin to feel a pang of remorse for all the wickedness he had committed? We believe not. He was a heedless and selfish boy, and was pretty much at his ease so long as he thought that he was safe. At first he was afraid that his lies would be discovered, and

that accordingly he would be punished. But his tricks had been successful in removing the chances of detection, and he thought all was right. He had, however, committed a theft. "Pooh," said he to himself, "no one knows anything about *that*."

On the second day after the discovery of the lost paper, Jervis was sitting in a summer-house at the corner of the garden. Suddenly the boy Luke Jones stood before him.

"I have been looking about for you all day."

"Well, here I am; but what is it you now want?" replied Jervis, not at all pleased to see Luke making his appearance in this unceremonious manner.

"I want only a trifle—no more than threepence. I wish to buy another doe rabbit, and I can get one where I got the pair."

"Threepence—you impudent rascal! Why should I give you threepence? You bargained for sixpence: I paid you that, and shall give you no more."

"But there is a new score run up. I saw you take the sixpence from the monkey-boy's hat!"

Jervis almost dropped with horror from the seat. Luke continued—

"Yes, I saw it all as clear as could be. You thought to have gone up the old yew-tree, did you, without my seeing you? I knew of the blackbird's nest before you did; and when I saw you get into the churchyard, I guessed where you were going. If you had dared to rob the nest, I would have taken the birds from you, for I know where I can sell them. Why, I was lying snug behind the big gravestone when I saw you snatch the sixpence! I could have touched you as you ran away!"

Jervis was in a state of dreadful agony—not, however, yet the agony of repentance. He was only terrified more than ever for the consequence of his misdeeds. And was he to be impelled into the commission of fresh sins in order to shelter his former iniquities? It was no use resisting the young wretch, who had established a power over him.

"Now, my good fellow"—good fellow again—"I hope you will not say a single word about this. I will give you something afterwards, you know—but not now, you understand?"

Luke would understand nothing. He was

dogged in adhering to his threat. He either should get threepence from Jervis next day, or Mr Davenport should be told the whole story from beginning to end—lies, theft, and all.

What a state of misery to be in! But it is always so with evil-doers. Each is at the mercy of his confederates. All who have experienced it, well know what *kind* of mercy that is.

Jervis parted with Luke in a state of great perplexity. He could not devise where he could obtain the sum named. Once he thought of asking Edward and Annie if they could lend him as much. But second thoughts made him reject this plan. He wished to procure the threepence without any one knowing it. On recollection, he remembered that Mrs Davenport always kept a quantity of copper money in a small leathern purse which she carried about with her keys in a basket. The basket, when not required, stood on a work-table in the parlour. It was not without many apprehensions that this wicked boy resolved to commit a deliberate theft of money in the dwelling which gave him shelter. Heedless and foolish as he was, he had the sense to know that he was

planning a grievous wrong. But, as before, he tried to persuade himself that what he did would prevent a greater mischief taking place! In this attempt to reason himself into a belief that there can be no harm in committing what he considered a *small* crime, in order to prevent a mischief arising from a *greater*, he only followed a too common practice. People of a loose way of thinking frequently try to shelter themselves from the effects of one error by committing another. It is, however, unnecessary to say that this is decidedly immoral. There can be no compromise between truth and falsehood. The truth ought to be told, and a line of honesty followed, whatever be the consequences; and in point of fact this would invariably be the *safest* course. Honesty is, beyond dispute, the best policy!

Jervis flattered himself with the delusion that the fresh sin he meditated was but a *small* affair. Fortified with this short-sighted reasoning, we grieve to add that Jervis took an opportunity that evening, while the room was empty after tea, of abstracting threepence from Mrs Davenport's leathern purse. Next morning early the sum was handed to Luke, who now declared

that Jervis might hold himself quite at his ease!

Jervis tried to think so too, but he felt that the *ease* which Luke spoke of was far from being a perfect ease. It was mingled with an unpleasant feeling of anxiety, which such kind of *ease* always is. A guilty conscience is anything but a light burden, and this Jervis already experienced.

We must return to Edward and Annie. On the day on which Jervis had the interview with Luke in the summer-house, Annie complained of being very unwell. She could take no food; and while lying in bed, she moaned piteously at intervals. Edward was constantly by her side. He sat holding her thin hand, and at times kissed her pallid cheek.

During the morning, Mr and Mrs Davenport did not particularly interfere. They hoped that the crisis of the great disclosure was now about to take place.

Annie was suffering from a kind of low fever, which had begun to come over her from vexation of mind. Edward tried his best to console her; but he was not a good consoler. He was a high-spirited boy, and spurned the oppression under which his sister and he were suffering. It is impossible to be surprised at this feeling; nor do we think it altogether reprehensible. We can approve of meek submission in a righteous cause; but nature and reason alike rebel against a false accusation. Edward's indignation at seeing his sister suffering will at least meet with some apology, from the fact of it being so natural for a brother to cherish a sister, and defend her, if she need defence.

But just as it is a virtue and privilege of man or boy to defend the weak, so is it a true mark of excellence in the weaker sex to employ their influence in staying the angry word or hasty hand, or in stepping between foes, as a peace-maker. Never, we think, does girl or woman appear so truly admirable as when seen in one of these characters; and amid the early sorrows of slander and false witness, Annie had more than one opportunity of proving her strong in-

fluence over her brother when angry feelings were gaining the victory.

In the course of the day Annie became worse. Mr and Mrs Davenport now began to have some misgivings as to the correctness of their opinions of Edward and Annie's guilt; and, a little alarmed, sent for the village physician.

Dr Cook was a person who took a kind interest in children. When he arrived, it was late at night, and he could do little in the meantime but give Annie a composing draught to cause her to sleep; and he trusted that when he came to see her in the morning, she would be somewhat better.

Edward could with difficulty be persuaded to leave Annie for the night; and he was again by her bedside at sunrise, and watched her till she awoke, which was just before Dr Cook arrived.

The doctor opened the door of the room so cautiously, that he had an opportunity of overhearing a little conversation between the brother and sister before they knew he was present. Annie was much better, and she spoke cheeringly to Edward, and said she hoped soon to be well.

"Now listen to me, dear brother," she said; "I beg you will not think ill any longer of papa and mamma Davenport. They have been very, very kind to us: and we have now no father and mother but them. I am sure they will soon be sorry for thinking we told any stories. You know we must forgive injuries. Ah, how my own dear mamma used to tell me that and many other good things!"

Dr Cook took off and wiped his spectacles. The worthy man was affected with the piety of Annie's sisterly admonitions. Having prescribed for his patient, and desired that she should be kept quiet, he descended to the parlour.

"It is with difficulty I can believe what you told me about these children," said he to Mr Davenport. "The boy is a fine little fellow, and the girl is the most amiable patient I have ever met with."

"Indeed," replied Mr Davenport, "it is most distressing; and really, except in that one affair, their conduct has been most excellent; so that, after all, we cannot help loving and forgiving them. Should it afterwards appear that they really are blameless—however, that can scarcely be—I will"——

Here Mrs Davenport entered the room and interrupted the conversation. She appeared agitated and distressed.

"There surely must be a thief in the house as well as a liar," said she, addressing her husband. "Some one, I am positive, has, since last night, taken threepence from my leathern purse. I missed it only a few minutes ago, when I was giving money to Mary to go to the poulterer's for something I wanted."

Jervis, who sat in a corner of the room poring over a book, felt stunned at this announcement, and pretended to read with greater diligence. Dr Cook, who had no desire to be mixed up with family matters, made a motion to withdraw, but was solicited to keep his seat, for Mr Davenport wished to talk with him on the nature of some late scientific discoveries. The doctor politely resumed his seat.

This delay was a great relief to Jervis, and he was enabled to make up his mind to endure questioning on the subject of the lost money. Still further to his relief, Mrs Davenport retired from the room without saying anything more than that she would go and make some inquiries among the servants.

Mr Davenport's conversation with Dr Cook had extended to about half an hour, during which Edward had entered the room unobserved, and seated himself with a book near Jervis.

"Ah, Edward, are you there?" said Mr Davenport, now seeing for the first time that he was present. "Come here to me and shake hands; I am not going to say any more about the lost paper. Perhaps I was too hasty in thinking you had taken it."

Edward's face was immediately radiant with gladness. He forgot all that he had suffered, and cordially embraced his kind benefactor.

"And may I go and tell Annie that it is all over?"

"No, not just yet; Dr Cook says she must not be disturbed. But what noise is that at the front door? Run out, like a good boy, and see what is the matter."

Off went Edward in an instant; but he returned almost immediately.

"Oh, sir, come out, come out; Towler, the watch-dog, has killed a poor begging-boy's monkey."

All hastened to the door; and there they found Mary, the cookmaid, carrying into the house the monkey of the Savoyard, apparently in a dying state, from the effects of a sharp bite by Towler; while the owner of the poor creature stood at a little distance clasping his hands in despair.

"How did all this happen, Mary?" inquired Mr Davenport.

"Why, you see, sir, I was just coming in from the poulterer's, where mistress sent me; and when I entered the outer gate, there I saw this Italian boy going up to the house to beg, as I fancy. I would have turned him back, if I had not thought that the children would perhaps like to see his monkey and his white mouse. I told the boy to take care of the dog, which doesn't like the sight of beggars; but I think he did not know what I said: and then all at once To[illegible] on him, and bit the monkey just a[illegible]

Th[illegible] l easily be supposed, was a co[illegible] distress to Mr Daven-

port; and he desired that the boy should be brought in and attended to, while Dr Cook examined the monkey's wounds.

The monkey, on examination, was found not to be seriously injured, though a good deal frightened; and Dr Cook declared that after a day or two's nursing it would again be fit to travel.

"And where do you come from, my poor little boy?" inquired Mrs Davenport.

The Savoyard could speak little English; and it could only be learned from him that he had travelled a long way, and was very poor and very hungry. He afterwards made it known that neither the monkey nor the mouse belonged to him, but were the property of a cruel master, who would beat and starve him if he did not return with a certain sum of money.

"Did you give him the sixpence which I dropt into your hat a day or two ago when you were asleep in the churchyard?" asked Mrs Davenport.

The boy, on thoroughly comprehending the question, protested that he had never received any sixpence from the lady.

Mrs Davenport felt as if there were to be no end to the incomprehensible things which were taking place in and about Elm-Tree Hall. Placing her hand over her eyes for a moment, to collect her senses, she was recalled to ordinary affairs by Mary.

"Here, ma'am, is the change from the poulterer's," and Mary laid down some silver on the table.

"Where did you get this sixpence, Mary?" asked Mrs Davenport hurriedly.

"From Mr Simms, ma'am."

"Go and request Mr Simms to be so good as come down to speak to me for a moment."

When Mr Simms arrived at the Hall, he was ushered into the parlour, where sat Mr and Mrs Davenport, Dr Cook, and the two boys; and now may be said to have commenced the clearing up of the various domestic mysteries.

"Mr Simms, will you look here? I am sorry for troubling you, but you will oblige me by saying where you got this sixpence which you have just given to Mary? It is rather a remarkable sixpence, you see, from having a hole in it. Do you remember how you got it? I have a particular reason for inquiring."

"I know to an exactness, madam, where I got it. It was from Luke Jones, for a pair of rabbits; the children have been playing with it ever since. I had to take it from them to-day from a scarcity of change."

"Who is Luke Jones?"

"The boy who is sometimes employed in the grounds at the Hall here."

Mr Davenport rang the bell, and desired a servant to go and bring Luke Jones; adding, "If you cannot see him, desire Job Dennis the constable to find him and bring him here."

The servant could not see Luke anywhere, and he gave his commission to Job, who in about twenty minutes produced Luke to the assembled company.

Luke was too shrewd not to guess the cause of his being sent for; and when he confronted Mr Davenport, who was known as a severe magistrate, he at once made up his mind to tell all he knew.

"Come forward, Luke, and answer me a question," said Mr Davenport. "Where did you get the sixpence which you gave to Mr Simms for a pair of rabbits?"

Luke cast a glance towards Jervis.

"I got it from young master there; young Master Jervis."

"Very good. And now, Jervis, where did you get the sixpence?"

No answer.

"Luke, have you ever got any other money from this young gentleman?"

"Yes, I got threepence yesterday."

"And what have you had all this money for?"

Luke hesitated to answer this question, but a hint as to the constable caused him to find his tongue.

"I will tell you all, sir, and I trust to your honour's mercy. The young gentleman gave me the sixpence not to tell you that it was he who let the paper fly out at the window, when he was looking at the pictures in your study."

"And the threepence?"

"He gave me that not to tell that I saw him take the sixpence from the monkey-boy's hat."

"Luke, you will go into the next room till I want you."

How painful it is to proceed with our tale of juvenile delinquency and perverted early train-

ing! Perhaps, however, the narration may not be without its use, as a warning to boys who are placed in a world full of temptations to err.

As soon as Luke left the room, Jervis burst into tears, and cast himself on his knees at the feet of his much-abused benefactor; and piteously did he plead for mercy, and protest that if pardoned this time, he would never more tell a falsehood, or take what was not his—no, never.

Mr Davenport leant his head on his hand, and seemed to be struggling with the grief which had so suddenly and terribly burst on him.

"Go from me, thou miscreant, thou liar and thief!" cried he, rousing himself to action. "Your crime is too great for pardon: you must go to prison. You have disgraced yourself, and brought affliction on the whole of us. Dennis, do your duty."

Jervis, who lay sobbing on the carpet, again pled for mercy—mercy only this once. But Dennis, with his accustomed callousness to such scenes, prepared to drag him from the room, and already his hard knuckles were pressed against his throat. Jervis screamed as if his heart would have burst. The folly of his whole

conduct flashed upon his mind in a moment. He felt now, when too late, the force of what he had often been told—namely, that sooner or later our sins, large or small, are sure to come to light. And it must be owned that he saw what a wicked boy he had been. Not only was he condemned as a mean and cowardly liar, and the "bearer of false witness" against the innocent, but he stood a convicted thief of a double character, who had stolen from the poor and starving, and again from his benefactors—those to whom he was indebted for food and shelter, and to whom he was bound by every tie of gratitude.

Such were the remorseful feelings of the young delinquent as he lay in agony on the ground. All were shocked at the spectacle: and Dr Cook, who was greatly overcome, interceded with his friend to pardon the offender; at all events not to send him to prison. Edward also warmly begged for mercy: he declared that he quite forgot and forgave Jervis for all that he had done; and so likewise would Annie forgive him. "Do, good dear sir, only give Jervis another chance, and I will be bound he will not do anything naughty again."

Mr Davenport was not proof against these intreaties, and, besides, he was far from feeling that it would be proper to send Jervis to jail, even as a matter of form. Job, accordingly, was desired to leave the room till it was settled what was to be done. What a relief it was to Jervis to find that horny hand withdrawn from his throat! And how abjectly grateful he was for Mr Davenport's unlooked-for mercy.

Our story is nearly finished. Jervis was deemed to be no longer a suitable member of the family, but was sent to a small boarding-school in the north, where, being put under a rigorous system of training, good expectations were formed of his future life. Edward and Annie, taken into favour as they deserved, were carefully and liberally educated by Mr Davenport, in whose house they spent the happiest years of their existence. Luke Jones, we need hardly say, was dismissed from all employment at the Hall, and found it necessary to go to a distant part of the country, where his bad character was unknown.

VICTOR AND LISETTE.

VICTOR AND LISETTE.

"Sit down beside me, dear Lisette, and let us talk of our journey. The cow is lying quietly down in the hollow there, and will not begin to move about for an hour. So let us talk of our plans. We must go to-morrow; father said this was to be our last day in the hills."

Lisette sat down beside her brother Victor. The scene was wild and lonely, being on the slope of the Puy de Dome, a lofty mountain in Auvergne, near the centre of France.

Victor was a smart boy of twelve years old, and Lisette, an equally active girl, was of the same age. According to a common custom in Auvergne, they were doomed to go forth into a strange world, without friends, without any other means of support than what God had given

them—willing hearts and hands. The period of their departure had been looked for with some interest. Pierre, their father, whose trade was that of making cheese for the market in Clermont, was too poor to think of keeping his boys at home, and he had already spoken to Victor about his journey. It was not his wish that Lisette should have left him, at least at this time; but the brother and sister were twins, and had been much attached to each other from birth. Together, hand in hand, they had in infancy gathered wild flowers along the sides of the heathy mountains; together they had daily tended a cow at the hill pastures; and at evening they had knelt together, and repeated the prayers in which their mother had instructed them. No wonder that they loved each other. Their attachment was so great, that they resolved not to be separated; and to this resolution their parents at length found it necessary to give their consent.

"Now tell me where we shall go to?" said Lisette, sitting down beside her brother.

"To Paris, to be sure!" answered Victor. "That is the place for a boy to do well, ay, and a girl too. An old shepherd told me that."

"But is it not a far way to Paris?" asked Lisette.

"Oh yes, I daresay it is two hundred miles."

"And do you know the road?"

"Not exactly; but we can ask. I know we have to cross that long ridge of mountains which rises like a great blue wall to the clouds. You see it, sister, just over in that direction, beyond the plain of the Limagne."

"And after getting over that, what do we do next?"

"Continue walking till we come to Paris."

"But we cannot walk without stopping to rest and sleep at night; and then we have no money to buy anything. I am afraid we shall have to beg."

"That we shall do as little as possible. We shall work, Lisette."

"I had not thought of that. But what shall we work at? If I had a hurdy-gurdy or cymbals, I could play. However, I can sing and dance a little."

"That is something; and father has promised to give us the sparrow-hawk which he caught last winter. I have made a wicker-

cage for it, and we can make a show of it on our journey."

"How delightful that will be! We can carry the cage between us. Surely good people will take pity on us, and give us a lodging for the night? I can sleep on straw or anything."

"I have another plan in my head, Lisette, which I think will do very well."

"What is it, Victor?"

"I can sweep chimneys. You know I have twice swept our chimney at home. My father and mother thought it a good thing for me to learn. Now I am resolved to try this trade to begin with."

"Oh how dirty it will make you, Victor! I should not like to see you a chimney-sweep. You remember how I cried when I saw you creep up the chimney, and heard you struggling amidst the soot?"

"I certainly would prefer not to sweep chimneys, but it cannot be helped; and perhaps I may come to like it. Perhaps you might like it also after a trial."

"But girls don't sweep chimneys, and nobody would employ me."

"I have thought of that; you can put on

clothes like mine. However, we can see about this afterwards."

In this way the two children planned their outset in life, till the shades of evening told them it was time to return home, which was at a small village inhabited by mountaineers not far from Clermont.

Next morning there was sorrow in the dwelling of Pierre; yet not that distress of mind which would have been felt by persons of refined feeling. The mountaineers of Auvergne are rude in manners, and altogether illiterate. They are accustomed—and it is a very harsh and unjustifiable custom—to send their children friendless and self-dependent from home, with no other advice than to be honest and industrious in any line of life they may adopt. Many of these Auvergnese children wander to Paris, where they pick up humble employments, and are in some instances esteemed for their diligence, for they consider no occupation too mean to be rejected.

Pierre and his wife had a large family, whom they looked forward to parting with as a matter of course; and therefore the departure of Victor and Lisette did not cause serious commotion in the household. The two children who were to leave home had risen early, and taken leave of the dog and the cow, which had long been their companions, and more than once they bade an affectionate farewell to their younger brothers and sisters.

After breakfast the separation took place. Pierre Jarnac, the father, sat at the door of his cottage, his broad slouched hat drawn down over his eyes, to conceal the emotion with which, notwithstanding his coarseness of character, he was for the moment affected. Madelaine, the mother, brought forth the two children equipped for the uncertain expedition on which they were destined to go. The sacrifice she felt to be painful; yet her feelings were less acute and touching than those of another personage in the scene. This was the grandmother of the children, an aged woman, who, seated on a stone near her son, was engaged with feeble fingers in spinning with a distaff, a custom still prevalent in France.

Little was said by the parents, except a few words as to behaviour; but the grandmother, whose mind was of a higher order, and more under the influence of religious sentiment, embraced Victor and Lisette with the fondest affection, and blessed them with a tenderness which was never effaced from their memory.

"Go, my poor little ones," she said; "go forth into a world of trials and temptations, with a heart bold in integrity, and humbly dependent on an ever-watchful Providence! Be pious, honest, and good children. Trust in God, and He will be your shield and defence. Call on Him, and He will be with you in trouble; He will deliver and honour you. Remember on all occasions three things—TRUTH, HONESTY, INDUSTRY; and take with you the blessing of your poor old grandmother, whose eyes will never more see you in this world."

With swelling hearts, the children turned away, and hurried down the rugged pathway which led from their native hamlet. Each was dressed in coarse, but not ragged garments, and in their pockets was stuffed a quantity of brown bread and cheese, sufficient, with economy, to serve for food at least two days. Victor carried

a wallet on his back, containing some old clothes, which, with a brush and large woollen cowl, formed the apparatus of chimney-sweeping. Jocrise, the sparrow-hawk, which was considered an important gift, was carried by the brother and sister alternately. And thus, as hundreds had done before them, did these poor children set out on their travels, the wide world before them, and rich only in the love they bore towards each other.

According to the directions they had received, the young wayfarers took a northerly course after passing through Clermont. On the afternoon of the third day they lost sight of their native hills, and now felt themselves alone and self-dependent. Till this time, they had eked out their first supply of food by the kind gifts of charitable persons, who took pity on them, or who were amused by a sight of their hawk, which was a remarkably fine bird. At last, however, they arrived at a village where nobody was inclined to give them anything, and where Jocrise failed to excite any curiosity.

"I think I had better try to sing a little," said Lisette to her brother; "perhaps some one will be pleased, and throw us a trifle; but I am

very tired and very hungry, and fear I shall not be able to sing so well as I did at home."

Lisette accordingly began to sing a song which is common among the peasantry of Auvergne. The air was sweet and simple, and sung with taste, though with little effect. It was indeed a melancholy effort, and altogether failed in drawing attention.

"It is no use trying any longer, dear Lisette," said Victor; "nobody here cares for singing; besides, we have no musical instrument, and that is very much against us. Let this be an end of any attempt of the kind: I already feel ashamed at your having tried to excite charity by singing. We must work, that is the truth."

"I wish very much that we had anything to work at," replied Lisette, sitting down on a stone fatigued with her exertions. "But what are we to do in the meantime? Shall we walk on to another village before it grows dark?"

"No; it is getting late, and we may not be able to reach any more houses before the evening; so I shall go and ask at every door if there be any chimneys to sweep. I must commence business."

Victor was more successful in the pursuit of industry than his sister had been in singing. At the village inn his services were accepted. Putting on his proper accoutrements, he swept two chimneys, for which he received a few pence, and also lodging and some food for himself and his sister during the night.

"You see what a good thing it is to learn a trade!" said Victor to Lisette in the morning, as they again set out on their journey. "Here are threepence, which will keep us for several days, though I have a mind to save the money, in case of being afterwards in still greater difficulty."

In this manner—sometimes lodging in barns and cow-houses, and sometimes earning a little soup by sweeping the chimneys of the villagers—the two Auvergnese travelled for ten days, always keeping up their spirits by the prospect of doing well when they reached Paris. In the large towns through which they passed, they were less fortunate, for there the people were less compassionate, and the regular chimney-sweeps left no work to be done in that line.

When the humble pair had walked upwards of a hundred miles, they found themselves one

day far from any dwelling. A wide waste, bordered by a forest, lay before them; winter had come on, and the snow already lay thickly on the ground. Food they had not tasted for eighteen hours; and poor Jocrise, the companion of their travels, and a sufferer in their misfortunes, shivered in its miserable cage.

On and on they wandered as long as their legs would carry them, but no human habitation could they discover. The snow accumulated around them; and to increase their distress, they began to fear that they had lost their way. After walking and stumbling in the snow, they found, to their dismay, that they were just where they had been two hours before, which was near the foot of a leafless and solitary tree, surrounded by a few bushes.

"I feel so sleepy and tired," said Lisette, "that I think I shall sit down here till the storm is over."

Victor, who was more courageous and thoughtful, tried to persuade his sister against yielding to sleep, which he assured her was dangerous in the open air during frost; but Lisette's fatigue was too great. She sank down exhausted, and immediately fell into a slumber, while the snow

whirled in clouds around, and fell upon her unsheltered form.

"What am I to do now?" thought the unfortunate boy. "I cannot leave her, that is certain. I must watch till she has rested a little. But ah! poor Jocrise," continued he, addressing the nearly-famished hawk, "it would be cruel any longer to keep you confined in your cage. Go, take your liberty, Jocrise, and I hope you will be more fortunate than we are."

So saying, he opened the door of the cage, and the bird, with a loud scream of joy, mounted into the air, and was soon out of sight.

"I have been told," said Victor, after performing this act of humanity, "that God will not desert the poor, and least of all poor children who put their trust in Him, and try to deserve His care." And kneeling in the snow as he spoke, the following words burst from his lips, while tears rolled down his uplifted face:—"Oh, my heavenly Father! protect and guide me in this wilderness, and save my beloved Lisette. Oh Lord, thou who hast been a child like myself, do not abandon me. Thou who didst bless little children, have pity on us!" The utterance of this short prayer seemed to

impart a kind of new life to the Auvergnese; and after leaning for a moment on his staff to collect his thoughts, he resolved on rousing Lisette, and making one more bold effort to reach the nearest village.

Lisette was roused from her sleep with some difficulty, and made to sit up; but she was too faint from hunger to be able to walk. An event now occurred so very extraordinary, that its truth might well be doubted, unless we had the assurance of Victor in after life that it actually took place. This circumstance was the sudden return of the hawk with a large morsel of roasted hare in its talons. The starving creature had visited the forest at no great distance from the spot, and there, in searching for food, had seized on a hare which had just been roasted by a charcoal burner. The theft was not discovered till a portion of the prey had been devoured; and the bird, on being scared, had flown away with a remaining morsel to the place where it had been set at liberty.

This timely supply of food revived the starving children; and favoured by a gleam of sunshine, which broke through the thick clouds, they pushed on their way, and were so fortu-

nate as to reach the road which led through the forest. A short time brought them to the hut of the charcoal burner. By this poor man, whose dinner had been so unceremoniously carried off, they met with a kindly welcome, and were kept by him two days, during which they gained sufficient strength to proceed on their journey. As a reward for his hospitality, Victor, at parting, presented Jocrise to the charcoal burner. It was not without regret that he gave away a creature which had probably been the means of saving the lives of himself and sister, but he was also moved by gratitude to his benefactor, and he foresaw that the hawk with its cage might probably be troublesome on reaching the great city.

Again proceeding on their way, the two children encountered various difficulties, and suffered much wretchedness, till they arrived in Paris, the point to which all their earthly hopes tended.

Where they went, where they lodged, and how they at first lived in Paris, has not been related. It is enough to know that, thrown entirely on their own shifts for subsistence, they followed the profession of chimney-sweeping

—happy only in being together, and assisting each other with the gains of their humble and painful calling.

Twelve months had passed since Victor and Lisette had arrived in the French capital. It was now the first day of the new year. The sun was shining with more than usual brilliancy, and so free was the atmosphere from fog, that even at Paris it was pure. All had a summer look, save the thick crust of snow that glittered and crackled under the feet of the crowd that went and came through the street St Honoré, hurrying and jostling, as if the day were all too short for the business they had got to do; and yet it was not more than ten o'clock.

A little chimney-sweep, leaning against the railing of a gateway in the Palais Royal, was watching intently the busy crowd. A gentleman and lady now passed close to him with arms full of toys—dolls, humming-tops, battledores, a parcel of books, whose gay covers shone

in the bright sun. Victor stood gazing wistfully on all these beautiful things, when he saw the gentleman stop and beckon to the driver of a coach on the stand. The vehicle drew up, and the little chimney-sweeper ran to open the door and let down the steps. The lady and gentleman got in, but not before a smile from the former, so kind, so benevolent, had encouraged Victor to say, "God bless you, my good lady, and grant you a happy New-Year." The lady smiled upon him again, and hastily drawing out her purse, said, as she put a few sous into his hand, "I am sorry I have not any more change about me. I hope, however, my New-Year's gift may be a good handsel." Victor thanked her, shut the door, and away drove the carriage, leaving him to count up his first gains for that day. "I am sure there are ten at least," thought he; "and the good lady gave them to me with such good-will, that they will bring me more." As he counted, his eyes fell upon one piece very small, round, and yellow. Victor started — it was gold, a real louis-d'or, bright as if it had but just come from the mint.

The boy instantly raised his eyes to look after the coach; it was already out of sight; but re-

collecting that it had turned into the Rue de Chartres, he ran at full speed in that direction, and as he reached the end of the street, he saw a black and yellow carriage passing through the gateway into the adjoining square. He continued to follow it till he came out upon the quay, panting and breathless. Once there, he could no longer tell which way he had better take: equipages were crossing each other in every direction; so many carriages, long, narrow, wide, small, red, yellow, black, covered the Pont Royal, that there was not the slightest chance of distinguishing any one, not to say of reaching the one he was in search of. Victor, however, went on, but with slackened pace, till he stopped at last in the middle of the bridge. How was he now to find any trace of the carriage? He was not even sure of its colour. All had passed so quickly, that he remembered nothing distinctly but the smile of the lady, and her kind wish as she put the money into his hand. One thing, however, was certain, she did not mean to give him the louis-d'or. But how was he to return it? Where could he find her?

Victor now retraced his steps; and as he was

walking along the quay, he came to the little staircase leading to the baths. He still held the money in his hand. He now disengaged himself from the crowd, and going down a few of the steps, he carefully wrapped the piece of gold in paper, and put it into the inside pocket of his jacket. This precaution seemed to tranquillise his mind: he felt himself responsible for this money, as if it were a trust confided to him, of which he must one day give an account; and this once secured, he breathed more freely. As to the sous, they were his own property, and he now finished reckoning them. He had exactly ten, of which he now made two parts. "If I could but get ten more to-day," thought he, "I would buy a New-Year's gift for Lisette—an Auvergne doll, dressed in the fashion of our own dear country. But after all, what would she do with it? It is better to give her something useful."

A tap upon the shoulder interrupted his meditations. He started, for he remembered the money he had in charge; and for the first time in his life he dreaded having been watched. He turned, and saw that it was Jacquot, a comrade, a boy who had come from

his own village some years ago. Although, during his abode in Paris, Jacquot was greatly changed, and bad example and idleness had made him contract habits far different from those of Victor and Lisette; although he often flew into a passion at the remonstrances of Victor, who, younger by two years, had much more sense and decision of character; yet the two boys had still some ties between them. They spoke to each other whenever they met; they lived in the same lodging-house; and the remembrance of their families and their native hills formed a link not yet broken.

"Well, what are you about here all alone, like an owl?" said Jacquot. "I was very near passing without seeing you; but as I was walking along the quay, I took it into my head to look over the parapet at the river gliding by, and I discovered you seated on the steps cooling yourself. A quarter of an hour more, and you would have been frozen. Come and have a game at pitch-and-toss to warm you. The sun is shining on the footway, and a number of lads are waiting for me."

"No," said Victor; "you know very well that I never play at pitch-and-toss."

"Because you are afraid of losing your money."

"Yes," answered Victor. "I am afraid of losing the money that Lisette and I find so hard to earn, and I am afraid of winning the money of others."

"Afraid of losing, well and good; but afraid of winning! that is too good a joke," said Jacquot. "I do not understand you."

"You know that for some time we have not understood each other," said Victor; "and it used not to be so formerly."

"Pooh!" replied Jacquot, "because formerly I was a fool. I thought it was wrong to gamble, wrong to drink, wrong to amuse myself instead of working. I am no longer such a simpleton. I now know that money is all the more pleasant for being had without trouble; and I prefer picking up sous by asking charity of the rich and well-dressed, than wriggling my way as you do up these long sooty chimneys."

"Begging!" said Victor with an expression of utter disgust; "and you young and strong, and with all your limbs!"

"Oh you were always a proud fellow," retorted Jacquot. "But come, be wise for once."

Victor only shook his head in reply.

"Come," added Jacquot, "don't be sulky—that's a good fellow. Take my advice, and come try your fortune: if you have no money, I will lend you some. It was only this very morning I won all this at pitch-and-toss," and he displayed a handful of copper.

"I have money enough," said Victor. "But did I not tell you I will never gamble?"

"Well, then, will you come to any of the principal streets and look at the shops, where there are all the fine people?"

"No, I have not time," said Victor. "I must go look after Lisette, whom I appointed to meet me at the Palais Royal. I am sure she is now more than an hour waiting for me."

"I never saw such a fellow," said Jacquot. "Well, I will go take a walk, and I lay a wager I shall pick up something by the way. We shall see this evening which of us will be the richest—you, who will have been looking for *work* all day; or I, who will have been only looking for amusement."

"We shall see," said Victor; and both now went on their way. The one, tall and robust, lounged along the quay, rattling two pieces of

slate, like castanets, to mark the time of the air he was singing, stopping every now and then to look at some stall or puppet-show; then suddenly hanging his head, and taking off his cap at the approach of a group of walkers, and interrupting his song to cry, in a piteous tone, "One sou to a poor boy, kind sir, good madame." The other, younger and slighter, walked with firm step and head erect, without accosting anybody.

In the very spot which Victor had left, leaning against the same railing, a little chimney-sweep was standing in the same attitude, the same dress, nay, it seemed, with the very same features. Any one who had seen Victor there in the morning, might have thought that he had remained there since immovable; but on looking closer, he would have seen that the resemblance was not complete. This second young creature had fair hair and blue eyes; while the small and delicate features, and form of feminine grace, discovered her to be a girl, notwithstanding her

boyish habiliments. Poor Lisette! what a hard fortune, that at thy age thou shouldst be compelled not only to give up the feelings of thy sex, but to seek subsistence by the sweeping of chimneys!

At this time the brother and his sister were in some distress. They had lately had little employment; and to aggravate this misfortune, Victor had hurt his leg on an iron hook in the flue of a chimney. Lisette, too, had been afflicted with fever; and though she had struggled hard with the disease, and had gone on working without telling her brother, he perceived that she was ill, and had nursed her with parental solicitude, for he was everything to her—protector, guide, friend.

No sooner did she descry him at a distance, than she ran eagerly towards him.

"Ah, dear Victor, you are come at last! I have been waiting for you so long! But I have good news for you. See, I have earned sixteen sous to-day. What have you done?"

"I was given ten sous," said Victor; "and here they are."

"We have made a very good New-Year's Day work of it. I was greatly afraid I should have

got nothing to do; but I have already swept one chimney, and carried home a parcel."

"Take care of overworking yourself," said Victor; "you are not strong yet, my poor Lisette! You must rest, and leave me to work for both. I have done nothing to-day but open a carriage door; and certainly I was well paid for very little."

"Ten and sixteen are twenty-six. What shall we do with all this money?" asked Lisette.

"We will lay by thirteen sous," said Victor. "You know that we agreed to save half of what we earn against a bad day, when there is no work to be had."

"How I should like to save as much money as would enable us to go back to Auvergne and buy a cow! We could then live the rest of our days there."

Victor sighed. "I was in hopes you had forgotten that," said he.

"Forgotten it!" exclaimed the little girl. "I scarcely think of anything else; only I do not speak of it, for fear of grieving you. It was only last night I was dreaming of it. I thought we were both on the road to Clermont, quite near it; and the town, with its great dark

cathedral, seemed coming to meet us. I saw the Puy de Dome as plain as I see you now; and I began to walk so fast—oh, so fast!—that I soon got beyond the houses, and over the mountain and all, till I found myself in the very middle of our village, just before our own home, where we left grandmother sitting"——

"What is the use of talking of that?" interrupted Victor, "as it is only a dream; and dreams, you know, are nonsense."

"But it is pleasant even to dream of home and the hills of infancy. Only a few nights ago, I dreamt we were sitting within the sunny slope of the Pariou,* with the cow and goat browsing on the green hollow beneath. When I awoke, alas! I was lying in our garret, and had to think of rising to put on my sooty clothes."

"Really, Lisette," said Victor, "you must give up talking in this way. I should like to give up chimney-sweeping as well as you, and go back and keep cows in Auvergne; but as that is impossible, I try not to think of it. Our business is to make the best of our lot."

* An extinct volcano near the Puy de Dome in Auvergne, which is now beautifully covered with grass, and is a place of pasturage for cattle.

His sister went on: "After all, we should not want so much money. A hundred francs would be enough. And we had close upon twenty when I was taken sick—very nearly a louis-d'or."

"A louis-d'or!" repeated Victor mechanically, and as if his thoughts were elsewhere. "What are you saying about a louis-d'or, Lisette?"

"I was saying we once had nearly a louis-d'or. Oh what would I give to have a louis-d'or!"

Victor started: instinctively his hand sought the pocket in which was the louis-d'or; but on the instant he remembered it did not belong to him, and his sister's wish appeared to him almost criminal.

"Courage, Lisette," said he, "we shall have it one day yet! Has not God always helped us? He will not forsake us now."

"But it is so long to wait," said Lisette; "and spring is coming very soon, and the hills will be so delightful."

"It does us no good talking about it," said Victor. "It breaks our spirit; and I always heard grandmother say that to wish for what could not be was only wasting both time and

strength, that might be employed in getting what was within our reach."

"Forgive me, dear brother, if I have vexed you," said the young girl caressingly.

Victor kissed her, and they now separated to look for work. But in vain did they traverse the streets, crying, at the top of their voices, "Sweep!—sweep!" Nobody called them—nobody noticed them; and they met again at four o'clock, not the least more advanced in their fortunes than when they parted. However, they were more cheerful, and more satisfied with themselves. They had done their duty; and if they had not got any employment, they had not to reproach themselves with voluntary idleness. Victor now produced two pounds of brown bread, a little cheese, and two apples. "Here is dinner for a king," said he, putting the whole into Lisette's lap, who had taken up her post on a bench at the door of a hotel in an unfrequented street. "And we have still fivepence left, to get a plate of soup when we go to our lodging to-night."

"And thirteenpence laid by," added Lisette, "for"—— And she stopped, unwilling to mention again her darling wish.

"It is not a bad beginning of the New Year," said Victor, "thank God! You are certainly recovering your strength. It is now two months since you had the fever, so that I trust all fear of a relapse is at an end. I am growing tall and strong enough for two; we are both willing to work; the severe weather is nearly over; and I have good hope for the coming year."

"But you do not know all," cried Lisette eagerly; "I have such a surprise for a New-Year's gift for you! Only think, Victor, I can read quite fluently. You know the little spelling-book grandmother gave me when I was coming away; see, here it is; I never parted with it. Only listen, Victor;" and pulling out of her pocket a small well-thumbed book, she began to spell with might and main.

Not a word was lost upon Victor, as he sat with his eyes fixed upon her, opening his mouth when she opened hers, shutting it when she shut hers, and drawing a long breath when some long syllable made her hesitate. He was all ear, all admiration, for this new accomplishment in Lisette, of which he had not the most remote suspicion. It was to him the pride, the joy of his heart, the fulfilment of one of his most aspir-

ing hopes. Often had he said, "If I could but earn enough for both of us, I would send Lisette to school." Often and bitterly did he regret not knowing how to read. He had begun to learn his alphabet before he left his native village, but he had never since found time to do more.

"Dear Lisette, who could have taught you all this?" exclaimed Victor, as soon as his wonder and delight suffered him to speak.

"Myself; that is, myself and everybody. I will tell you how it all happened. You remember you said one day, when I was in the fever, that you were so sorry you did not know how to read, for that you could earn much more as a porter than by sweeping chimneys. You said, too, that you wished so much you could have me taught to read and to count. I knew well that you had not the means to send me to school, and to support me without work. Now the whole time I was sick, I thought of nothing else, and by dint of thinking of it, an idea struck me."

"What was it, dear Lisette?"

"First, I said to myself, I will always carry my spelling-book about with me, and when I have nothing to do, I will open it. But it was

vain for me to look at it, not one word could I understand, for I did not even know a letter. At last one evening a lady, who looked very kind, passed quite close to me, and I ventured to say to her, 'Madame, is this an A or a B?' She told me instantly, and several other letters too. I went on in this way, asking the passers-by what I did not know; and they scarcely ever refused to help me. Some were even kind enough to stop and teach me how to spell a whole sentence. Others thought I was asking charity, and offered me money; but I thanked them, and said it was not *that* I wanted, for I could work, and did not need to beg."

"And it was a good answer," said Victor. "But why did you not tell me all this, Lisette?"

"Because I wished to surprise you. But you are not angry with me, my own dear Victor?"

"Oh no; but I should have been better pleased that you had not concealed anything from me. I believe that, even for a good end, there ought to be no secrets between friends."

"You are right, and I was wrong," said Lisette.

They now divided the bread and cheese, and began to eat with great appetite, chattering merrily the whole time of the surprise and delight of their grandmother when she should hear that Lisette could read. The repast over, they went arm in arm to their lodging; and after having prayed together to God to bless them, and to give them work and strength to do it, they fell asleep in peace.

The next day Victor was up at daybreak, and Lisette was still asleep when he was already in the street uttering his wonted cry, "Sweep!—sweep!" A thick mist was falling, and a dense fog veiled the sky, so bright and clear the day before. Victor heard footsteps behind him: it was Jacquot, who, with dejected air and downcast look, seemed almost afraid to accost him.

"What is the matter?" asked Victor.

"Matter enough," answered the other in a sulky tone. "I have nothing left—not a penny.

I lost everything last night. The rogues cheated me; but they shall pay for it: I must have my money again."

"Take my advice," said Victor; "do not go near those wicked boys any more. If you would not gamble, but would even now set to work, you would soon regain the lost time."

"You may be in the right; but to work, one must have work, and I have got none. Besides, I have got into the habit of doing nothing, and everything tires me. After all, I am grown too big to climb chimneys, and I know no other trade."

"But," said Victor, "the most pressing point now is, how you are to get anything to eat for to-day. Come along with me. Should work for two offer, I will help you, and we will get through it; and if we can find only enough for one, I will go halves with you."

"You are a real countryman and friend," said Jacquot. "I only wish I were like you, with the will and the power to be good; but I know not how it is, my good resolutions never last, and I yield to every wild inclination."

"It is because you have not been accustomed to resist: only try."

At this instant a window was opened, and a servant called out, "Ho, little chimney-sweeps, come up here." They obeyed the call; and as they went up stairs, she said, "It was very lucky you came this way; the chimney was near catching fire yesterday; and when my master was going out this morning, he charged me to have it swept before he returned." As she spoke, she brought them into her master's study, and desired them to lose no time in going to work. The flue was narrow, and Victor, as the slightest, prepared to go up. He took off his jacket, while his companion went for a cloth to put up to the chimney, in order to prevent the soot from spoiling the furniture. These preparations made, Victor, by the help of Jacquot's back as his first stepping-stone, went up climbing and scraping, till from the top he sounded forth, in a somewhat hoarse voice, one of his native Auvergne ditties. When he came down, Jacquot was not in the room; but in a moment after, came back with the servant, carrying a bucket and a sweeping brush. Victor wanted to put the soot into his bag, but Jacquot said it was useless. The woman would not give them more than ten sous; Victor urged upon her that the

chimney was very narrow, and therefore a very troublesome job, and was well worth twelve; but Jacquot was inclined to be much more accommodating—it seemed as if he were impatient to get away.

When they were in the street, he handed the ten sous to Victor, who wished to divide it with him.

"No, no," said Jacquot; "you must keep the whole."

Victor saw that he was confused and agitated; and suddenly, while he was still urging him to take his share, Jacquot quitted him abruptly.

Victor did not comprehend this sudden departure; but accustomed to see Jacquot grow very soon tired of his company, he did not attempt to account for it, and pursued his way, till at the sight of some books in a shop window he stopped, thinking how nice it would be to buy one for Lisette, now that she was such a fine scholar. One volume in particular attracted him; and the bargain being made, he had just paid for it, when a sudden noise in the street caught his attention. Cries of, "Stop thief—stop thief!" and seeing several persons running

along towards him, he turned round to discover the object of pursuit, but he could not perceive any one running, or with the slightest appearance of fear. "There he is—there he is!" screamed a woman. "The little sweep! Seize him—seize him!"

And on the instant, Victor felt his collar roughly grasped, while a crowd collected about him; and one man clenching his fist at him, said, "So, you little villain, you make your way into houses and rob them, and make honest people lose their character."

"I am no robber," said Victor indignantly.

"And who took the louis-d'or, the bright new louis-d'or, that was on the gentleman's bureau? I suppose it was I, forsooth! Is that what you mean to say, you little viper? Say it to my face if you dare;" cried a woman, whose voice Victor recognised as that of the servant of the house which they had just left.

"Search him," cried another.

"Oh yes, search him, search him!" was now the cry from all quarters.

The porter who had accompanied the woman-servant prepared to take off Victor's jacket; but he made so determined a resistance, that

the man was obliged to seek the aid of the by-standers. Victor turned pale as death, and said, "I will take it off myself, if you will but have patience."

"We will save you the trouble, my lad," and the man snatched the jacket out of his hands, searched one pocket, then the other, from which he drew a piece of paper, and tearing it open, triumphantly displayed a louis-d'or!

There was a general movement amongst the crowd, followed by confused murmurs—"Oh the thief! the liar!" "What a little wretch!" "And they say the people from Auvergne are so honest, but who will believe it now?" "Drag him to prison!" "No, he must be taken before the police magistrate." "Yes—this way—this way." "Only thirteen years of age," said an old woman, "and already ripe for the galleys." "It is to be hoped that he has neither father nor mother," observed another: "this is enough to break their hearts, and bring shame on their gray hairs."

To these terrible words, and the reproaches showered upon him from all sides, Victor opposed neither remonstrance nor defence. He uttered not a word, he shed not a tear, but stood

motionless—lifeless, it might have seemed—were it not for the heaving breast, the contracted brow, and quivering lip. But he was soon compelled to move. His persecutors were at his back. "Come, get along there, young housebreaker."

Lonely and sad was Lisette that evening. All day long had she vainly sought her brother at their usual places of meeting, and as night came on, her uneasiness became almost distraction. Hitherto, she had tried to be satisfied in the hope that he might have procured some unexpected job, and been delayed; and she stood watching and waiting in the street till darkness compelled her to retreat to the garret where she slept. She threw herself on her knees in an agony of supplication to Him who she felt alone could help her, and then seated herself on the edge of her flock-bed, listening to every noise, and starting up at the sound of voice or step. But hour after hour struck, and

no Victor—nor did Jacquot make his appearance.

With the first light of day Lisette again commenced traversing the streets in her fruitless search. Whenever she saw a chimney-sweeper, no matter how far off, she ran to see if it were Victor. Wherever a group of persons stood, thither she hastened in eager search; but Victor was nowhere. Thus passed the first, the second, and the third day of Victor's disappearance. On the fourth, necessity drove her to seek the employment which fatigue, want of nourishment, and sorrow, rendered her scarcely able to undertake. The evenings she still reserved for her fruitless search, till, tired out, she used to sit down at a corner of a street, sadly remembering that it was the hour that they used to reckon up the day's earnings, the hour in which they used to speak of home, of their grandmother, of a good Providence, who had kept them all their life long until now, poor orphans as they were. For a moment she used to fancy him again by her side; and when she woke to the sad reality, when she found herself alone, alone in the world, her heart would beat almost to bursting, till it

was with difficulty she regained her miserable garret.

One evening she caught a glimpse of a lad at some distance from her, whose figure, height, and air reminded her of Jacquot; indeed the dress alone made her doubtful that it was he. She quickened her pace; and when near enough to him, she uttered his name in a half whisper. He turned, looked at her, and instantly ran off. Lisette ran also, but he far outstripped her. Sometimes, however, he slackened his pace, as if waiting for her; but when she again came up with him, he set off running as before. She followed him into every narrow and dirty lane, resolved not to lose sight of him; and ran on, till at last he turned into a long and winding alley, which the dim light of a single lamp rendered the more gloomy. No living thing was to be seen but herself and Jacquot, who now turned round more than once and stopped. She was within a few paces of him, when he suddenly disappeared; and as she strained her eyes in search of him, she caught a glimpse of two men approaching from the other end of the lane. With an instinctive terror, she drew back under the shade of a

doorway; and her sooty garb favouring her concealment, they passed on without perceiving her; but, to her utter consternation, stopped close to her lurking-place in earnest conversation.

"I tell you," said one of them, "this Jacquot is a fool, that will be the ruin of the whole band. All last night he did nothing but talk in his sleep, calling out every moment some name like Victor; and this morning, when we told him what we were going to be about, he turned as pale as a sheet, and declared off. I tell you he is not safe, and it is destruction to us all his being allowed to join us."

"I admit he has not the heart of a chicken, but he will improve."

"He has been already six weeks with us, and what good has he done for us?"

"Well, after all, there are worse hands; besides, remember we cannot get rid of him—he knows too much of our secrets."

"Ah, there's the rub: but take my word for it, he had better not be let into any more of them. I know I do not intend he shall see this day's gains. At all events, we had best be off to our first snug hiding-place with them,

and at once; for it would not do for us to be grabbed with two watches and a pair of earrings in our pocket. The sooner we get rid of them the better."

As he spoke, they both wheeled round suddenly. "I think I heard something stir. Who goes there? Speak!" Before Lisette could recover her breath, actually suspended by terror, a voice answered for her—"A friend;" a voice which she knew to be that of Jacquot. All three now went off together; but before Lisette could venture to move, Jacquot returned alone.

"Hist!—hist! Lisette."

"Oh, Jacquot, I am here. Speak to me, Jacquot; if it be really you, speak to me."

"Hush! What is it you want?"

"I want you to tell me where is Victor."

"And do you not know that he is in prison?"

"In prison!" exclaimed Lisette. "Victor in prison! Ah you do not mean it, Jacquot—Victor, that never did any harm in his life!"

"He robbed a house, it seems, for all that."

"He—Victor? Oh, Jacquot, you are only making sport of me; you only want to frighten me!" And the poor child's pale cheek and

quivering lip told that he had but too well succeeded.

"I tell you he was taken up for theft."

"It is a falsehood—a cruel lie! You know, Jacquot, it is not true; it could not be true. He who would have starved a thousand times sooner than take one mouthful that belonged to another. It is impossible."

"Yes, that was a crotchet of his," muttered Jacquot.

"Oh, Jacquot, kind Jacquot, help me to find some way of saving him!" And Jacquot felt the hot tears fall upon his hands, which she now clasped in hers.

"I must be made to run this risk; and if you were not from my own country, I would see you far enough first."

"It is for Victor," said she. "He would do as much for you."

"I have my doubts, but I have no time to lose in words. Listen to me, and do what I tell you. In a few days you will be summoned before the tribunal. You will be asked if Victor had laid by any money, any savings. You must answer that he had. They will ask you how much, and you must say—and be sure you say

it boldly at once—that he had a louis-d'or; and you must say, too, that he showed it to you on New-Year's Day."

"But it would not be true," answered Lisette. "I cannot say so—it would be a lie."

"Well, tell the lie, that is all. Where's the mighty harm in that?"

"No, no; I cannot, I will not tell a lie. Victor has so often charged me to tell the truth; he would be so angry."

"Very well, then, let him go to the galleys."

"To the galleys! Victor go to the galleys!"

"There is no help for it, since you do not choose to save him."

"What shall I do? What will become of me?" cried Lisette, wringing her hands. "Is there no other way, Jacquot?"

"No other, I tell you."

"But Victor has so often told me that I must not do wrong, even though good may come of it; and it is so wrong, so very wrong, to tell a lie. Victor despises liars. I will go to the judges, Jacquot; I will tell them that they are deceived; that Victor never took anything that

was not his own, never in his whole life. I will tell them that I am certain he is innocent."

"A very convincing proof indeed! Much they would mind what you say. One word is as good as a hundred—you must say that he had a louis-d'or, that he told you so, and that he showed it to you, or you must be satisfied to see him go to the galleys!"

"Oh if it *were* but true!" cried Lisette.

"Well, I must be off. Do as you like: I wash my hands of you."

So saying, he left her. She attempted to follow him, but her limbs refused their office. At length, rallying her strength, she groped her way out of the lane, hurried along the quay, and, trembling like a leaf at every sound, regained her lodging; and throwing herself upon her bed, wept in agony at the thought that her Victor, her darling Victor, was suspected of being such as Jacquot, such as these two men; for she could no longer doubt that Jacquot and his *friends* were robbers. And when her mind turned back upon the danger she had escaped, her head reeled, and fervently did she thank God that he had preserved her to see once more, if she could not save, her heart's dear brother.

At length she fell into a heavy sleep, induced as much by sorrow as weariness.

The next day, and many following days, Lisette went in and out like one in a dream. Victor in prison! and for theft! This was the one absorbing thought. And she could save him—but how? At the expense of all she had been taught to hold dear as life itself.

"Here is a letter just brought for you, my girl," said the old landlord of her little garret one evening as she entered. "Put down your three sous for postage."

"And make haste," said the letter-carrier, "for I have not time to wait. Will you have, or will you not have, the letter? I can take it back, as it has not been opened."

"Oh no, no; give it me," said Lisette eagerly. "To-morrow, perhaps to-night, I may be able to pay you."

"To-morrow! It is the same tune with them all," growled the landlord. "It was a different

matter when the boy was here; I never had to wait for my rent; but since he is gone, the young one is going on like the rest. However, as you are from our poor old village, I do not care if, for once, I lend you three sous. But you must not forget that you will soon owe me a quarter's rent."

Lisette heard him not. She had got the letter, the precious letter; for something told her that there was no one in the whole world but Victor who would think of her, or think of getting a letter written to her. Her heart throbbed almost to bursting as she broke the seal; but when she attempted to read, the letters swam before her eyes. It was not until she had made several efforts, that she at last succeeded in deciphering the following words:—

"It is I, my own poor Lisette—it is Victor. You must have thought I was dead. Oh how you have wept for me! I am in prison, Lisette—yes, in prison!—and have been for six weeks. I was arrested in the public streets for theft! Is it not dreadful? I have suffered so much! Honest people abused me, because they took me for a robber; and the real robbers with whom I was shut up made game of me, and tormented me night and day because I did not go on as they did. They said all sorts of things to persuade me that it was folly to be honest; and per-

haps I might have ended in believing them, had I not been taken out of that, and removed to a place by myself. Now that I am alone, I do not feel half so sad; and my anger against those who accused me so falsely has quite passed away. I pray to God to make me always hate dishonesty as much as I do now; and if I could but see you, my own dear sister, I think I could almost be content. I had just bought a little book for you when I was arrested. Well, by it I learned to read without a teacher, like yourself, only that I had no one to help me. But I had not forgotten the names of the letters, and I had not looked at the book long before it brought to my mind all that I had learned when we were at home. I never stopped till I could read quite well; and I then tried to put the letters on paper, just like those in the book, that I might tell you that I was not dead; for even if I could write any other way, I knew you could not read it. But I must tell you, Lisette, that the book is like a companion to me. It is all as one as if some one were talking and telling me things, and often it keeps away sorrowful thoughts.

"They say my trial will come on soon; and so much the better, for I shall then see you again, Lisette. You are to be brought before the court for a witness. You will be asked questions, and be sure you tell the truth, nothing but the truth. Should I be condemned, God will give me strength to bear it, for he knows I am innocent; and he will help you to bear it too, Lisette. Our grandmother, Lisette—our poor grandmother! Well, let them do what they like to me, I am glad all the same that I never forgot her last words—'Truth, honesty, and

industry. No good thing will God withhold from them that walk uprightly.' Keep up your spirits, Lisette. It may be God will send the good yet; and sure it is good not to be here by my own fault. Oh, I could not have borne it then! Farewell! Thy loving brother,

VICTOR."

What an unexpected comfort was this letter to Lisette! The threats of Jacquot had terrified her, and were perpetually in her thoughts. The idea that what she might say would decide her brother's fate, and perhaps hasten his condemnation, haunted her night and day. She had a horror of falsehood, and yet she was told that upon her telling one depended her brother's only hope of escape. She had only to say a few words, and Victor would be given back to her again. But now all doubt, all indecision, was over—all was settled. The wishes, the commands of her brother, fully agreed with the dictates of her own conscience. He was innocent, and he wished to owe his acquittal only to the truth. Oh what a weight was taken from off that young heart!

The day fixed for the trial was come. Lisette had been summoned as a witness, but was to wait in a room near the court till her testimony

was required. Victor was already standing before the tribunal. His face, formerly so round and rosy, was now long and pale; and the countenance once so animated in its artlessness, now wore a grave and sad expression, in striking contrast to the size and apparent age of the poor boy.

"What is your name?" demanded the president.

"Victor Jarnac."

"Your age?"

"Nearly fourteen."

"Where were you born?"

"In a village near the Puy de Dome, in Auvergne."

"How long have you been in Paris?"

"Sixteen months."

"Where do you live?"

"I lodge with a man from our own country, old Bourry."

"That will do. You may sit down."

Victor obeyed; and the servant who had had him arrested was now brought forward.

"Yes, Mr President," said she, on being asked to identify the prisoner, "yes, there he is—that is the little viper that was near making me lose

my character; for I ask yourself whether, when a louis-d'or disappears, you think the cat took it. To be sure she does a great deal of mischief, and things you would not expect from a cat; but she could not carry off a louis-d'or, so it must have fallen on the poor servant's back; my twenty years' service would have gone for nothing. Nobody likes to lose money, and my master is a very careful gentleman; and"——

"All this is quite irrelevant, has nothing to say to the matter. You are only asked to tell what you know about the theft of which you accuse this boy."

"Yes I do accuse him of it, and I am not out of my reckoning. For all his demure looks, he is as cunning as a fox—a regular pickpocket. Indeed the other was something like—he had an honest look at least."

"The other! Oh, then, there were two?"

"To be sure there were. Did not I tell you so before? I was sweeping the study, and just as I was looking out of the window for a moment, I saw two chimney-sweepers passing. I called them in to sweep the chimney of my master's study, which had nearly caught fire the

evening before. There was a louis-d'or lying on the bureau, just if you forgot a thing; for you must know my master has great confidence in me, and always says, 'Madeline, if anything is lost in the house, you must be answerable to me.' Now he always takes his keys with him; but that morning, as ill luck would have it, he went out without locking up this louis-d'or, and I was giddy enough not to take it, though I saw it."

"Did you see either of the boys take it?"

"See them indeed! a likely story that they would wait for me to see them!"

"But how do you know that the theft was committed by them?"

"How do I know? It does not require much cleverness to know that! They were hardly in the street when I recollected the money, and I ran, all in a tremor, to the bureau; but I found no more of a louis-d'or than you would find in my eye now."

"What has led you to suspect this boy to be the thief rather than his companion?"

"Suspect! It is no suspicion; for the money was found with him, quite new and bright, and that in the sight of the whole street, as the

porter who ran after him with me, and helped to catch him, can tell you."

"Do you know what became of the other boy?"

"No indeed; I know nothing of him. But take my word for it this boy is the thief; if not, you may cut off my hand."

"Did you leave him alone in the room?"

"Yes—no—that is, I went in and out. My work was to be done, you know. It was while I went to fetch a bucket for the soot that the little rascal nabbed the money. He was still up in the chimney when the taller one—he was the most polite-spoken—said, 'Mamzelle, if you would have the goodness to get us a brush and a sponge, we would save you the trouble of cleaning after us.' I went—small blame to me—to get what he wanted."

"Then it was that boy you left alone in the room? for you have just said that the prisoner was still up the chimney."

"Wait a moment, sir, if you please. I had only got as far as the kitchen, when, turning round, I saw the tall one at my heels, and he offered to take up the things. He took the bucket and the sponge, and I the sweeping-

brush; and when we got back to the room, that little fellow there was come down from the chimney, and was standing before it covered with soot, and as black as a crow—you could see nothing but the white of his eyes; and at every stir he shook about such a quantity of soot."

"Was the bureau far from the chimney?"

"Yes, a good way; at the other end of the room."

"Was there a carpet, or was the floor waxed?"

"Waxed, and shining like a mirror."

"In that case the little chimney-sweeper, in going to the bureau, must have left the print of his feet—a stain of soot upon the floor?"

"Well, I declare, that is quite true! I never thought of that."

"You do not remember, then, having remarked any such marks?"

"No; but believe me you will find all the same that he is the thief. Had he not the money in his pocket? Was it not found in it? It is a clear case."

The porter deposed, in his turn, that hearing the servant crying "Thief—thief!" he followed her into the street, and caught the little chim-

ney-sweeper now before them, and found the louis-d'or upon him. He added that the prisoner struggled violently, and would not allow himself to be searched, till overpowered at last by two men.

The physician in whose house the theft had been committed was next called. He thought he knew the louis-d'or to be the one he had left on his bureau. It bore the date of the last year, and was quite bright. He could not positively say it was the same, but he was almost certain that it was.

The president now turned to the prisoner. "You are accused of theft: you have just heard the depositions against you. What defence have you to make?"

"I can only say, sir, that I am innocent."

"It is not enough to assert your innocence, you must prove it; and the proofs against you are overwhelmingly strong. Is it true that you were alone in the room when you came down out of the chimney?"

"Yes, sir; but I never stirred from the place where I stood, for fear of dirtying the floor; and my comrade and the servant came in almost instantly."

"Is it true that you violently resisted being searched after you were arrested?"

"Yes, sir."

"This louis-d'or was found in the pocket of your jacket: you cannot deny it?"

"I do not wish to deny it, sir," said Victor quickly, "for it is the truth."

"And do you mean to say that the money belonged to you?"

"No, it did not belong to me. I received it the day before among some sous that a lady gave me for opening the carriage door on New-Year's Day."

"You did not, then, perceive it immediately?"

"No, sir; by the time I saw the gold, the carriage was a good way off; and though I ran after it, I could not overtake it."

"You thought, then, it was given you by mistake?"

"I was sure of it, sir."

"And why did you carry it about on your person?"

"That I might return it, if I ever had the good fortune to see again the kind lady, its rightful owner."

"This seems all very strange and romantic.

If we are to believe you, this louis-d'or was given you on New-Year's Day; you kept it without changing it the whole of that day, as if it were money intrusted to you as a deposit."

"Yes, Mr President. It is just as you say."

"And yet you carried it about you, and ran the risk of losing it?"

"I had no other way of keeping it, and I believed this was the safest plan."

"What was the date of the coin?"

"I beg pardon, sir; I do not understand you."

"I ask you in what year the louis-d'or had been struck? What was the mark upon it?"

"I did not look, sir. But even if I had looked, it would have been the same thing; for at that time I did not know how to read."

"And within two months you are become more clever? Can you read now?"

"Yes, sir, and almost fluently; but sure, sir, Lisette taught herself too."

"So, then, it was in prison you pursued your studies! In all that you say there is a singular mixture of apparent truth and improbability. Let me advise you, for your own sake,

to say nothing but the truth—to tell no falsehoods."

"I am not telling a falsehood," said Victor, and his voice faltered. "You may not believe me, sir, yet what I say is perfectly true."

"How, then, can you explain the disappearance of the money on the bureau? Who committed the theft? for there certainly was a theft."

"It was not I," said Victor.

"Do you suspect your comrade? Why were you not found together when the alarm was given?"

"He left me the moment we came out of the house. He seemed uneasy and disturbed; but this is all I know."

The president now gave an order to bring the sister of the prisoner into court. Lisette was brought before the tribunal; but she trembled so much, and her agitation was so great, that she could scarcely stand. She saw nothing but a mass of faces, that all seemed to her frowning upon Victor, though as yet she had not perceived him. She heard nothing but a confused hum of voices angrily denouncing him as a convicted felon. The whole formidable array

appeared to her intended but to crush him, and it was by a strong effort she recovered herself sufficiently to answer, though with a heart beating almost audibly, the first usual questions as to her name, her age, and birthplace. The president then said, "Stand up and look at the prisoner. Do you know him?"

"Oh, Victor! brother, dear brother!" and the poor child fell upon his neck, twined her arms around him, clung to him; and Victor, but a few moments since so calm, so composed, now wept and sobbed convulsively. What were now the judges, the accusers, the spectators to them? They had met once more, they saw each other again, and all their sad suffering was forgotten. The whole court seemed to respect the burst of natural feeling; and Victor was the first to say —but the words came out thick and chokingly —"Come, dear Lisette, now go to your place, and try and answer the gentleman's questions."

"I need not again ask if you know the prisoner," said the president. "Do you usually live with your brother?"

"We have never been separated, sir, till now. It was he who took care of me ever since I was

a little infant. He brought me with him from our own country, and gave me share of all his earnings. He is father, mother, everything to me."

"This being the case—your mutual attachment being so great—I suppose you had no secrets from each other?"

"Oh no, sir! But indeed I once kept from him the secret of having learned to read, and he was angry, for he said there should be no secrets between friends."

"So much the better; you will help us to discover the truth. Did you pass New-Year's Day with your brother?"

"Yes; we were nearly the whole day together, except the morning, up to eleven o'clock."

"Did he not tell you anything particular? Did he not show you some money?"

"No, sir."

"Did he say nothing about a louis-d'or?"

Lisette's face flushed crimson, then as suddenly became deadly pale. "A louis-d'or!" stammered she, for she remembered the words of Jacquot, "If you do not say that he had a louis-d'or, and that he showed it to you, he will go to the galleys."

"Answer me," said the president in a stern tone. "Did you know that he had a louis-d'or? Did he show it to you?"

Lisette said to herself, "I will not tell a lie, I *must* not tell a lie;" and she answered with a voice which faltered, in spite of her firm purpose, "Oh no, he never told me; he never showed it me." Then covering her face with both hands, she burst into tears.

"Did you know the precise sum he had at the time?"

"Yes; ten sous."

"Have you any reason to think he had more?"

"Oh no, I am sure he had no more, for he was very sad when I spoke of our own country—of my longing to return to it. He was always so kind. I was saying to him that if we had but one louis-d'or"——

"You said this? And what was his answer?"

"I do not exactly recollect; but I think he said, 'We will have it some day yet.'"

"And the next day; did he say nothing the next day?"

"Oh the next day he went out a long time

before I was awake. It is now nearly two months ago, and I have never seen him till to-day;" and a fresh burst of tears choked her utterance.

"The deposition of your sister does not agree with your statement," said the president to Victor.

"She has said nothing but the truth, sir."

"Why did you conceal from her that you had that very day, by accident, become the possessor of a piece of gold? There was certainly very little probability that the money that had thus fallen into your hands would ever have been reclaimed."

"It was not the more my property, sir. My sister is very young—she longs to return to our own country. I was afraid that she would ask me to make use of what did not belong to us; I was afraid either of vexing her, or of not being able to resist her; in short, I was afraid both of her and of myself. I do not know that all this was even quite clear to my own mind, but I felt that it was better to be the only keeper of my secret."

"I know not how to reconcile such scrupulous integrity with the evidence against you.

I really wish to believe you, and yet I cannot but have my doubts. The instant the louis-d'or was mentioned, your sister blushed, and became visibly agitated."

"Do not mind me, do not listen to me, gentlemen!" exclaimed Lisette. "Believe him, believe Victor — he never told a lie in his life!"

The public prosecutor now proceeded to recapitulate the proofs, and sum up the circumstantial evidence against Victor. "You see," said he, "the prisoner had scarcely left the house when the louis-d'or was missed; he is pursued, and taken; and on searching him, which was effected after a long resistance on his part, a louis-d'or is found on him, in the pocket of his jacket, bearing the same date with the one missing. The prisoner now seeks to exculpate himself by inventing a romantic story. An alleged mistake renders him the possessor, or, as he terms it, the depositary, of a louis-d'or; and yet his sister admits that he never told her of this singular accident; that he never showed her the money; that he had in his possession no more than ten sous. She says that she expressed a wish to have a louis-d'or,

and that he answered—'We shall have it one day yet.' The next day he is called to sweep a chimney; he is left alone for a moment; a louis-d'or, forgotten on a bureau, catches his eye; the opportunity is too favourable; he seizes upon it. It is true suspicion might fall upon the comrade of the prisoner, but he does not appear to have run away, like a guilty person. Besides, the proof of the theft is there: in the eye of the law, he upon whom the stolen article is found is the thief." He concluded by calling on the court to give a year's imprisonment.

Lisette, who had listened with the most intense eagerness, could not restrain her sobs; Victor was pale, but calm.

The president, after a short consultation with the judges, declared, in the name of the tribunal, that search should be made for the boy called Jacquot, a chimney-sweeper; that old Bourry from Auvergne should be summoned as witness; and that, to give time and opportunity for further inquiry, the trial should be adjourned for a week.

Though the heart of Lisette sank within her at the thought of again appearing in that great

hall, so dark and so gloomy, of again standing up alone before so many, she awaited the following Saturday with the most extreme impatience. That day would decide everything. Victor would be declared innocent, free for ever; or disgraced as a thief, and imprisoned for a year. He must pass the whole spring, the whole summer, the whole autumn, far from her, and in prison. But no! God would not suffer it. She saw clearly, she knew well, who was really guilty. But how could she accuse a countryman from the same village? No! it was impossible!

The proper steps having been taken, Jacquot was arrested; and on the day appointed for a new investigation of the affair, he was brought before the tribunal. Victor, Lisette, the servant girl, and other parties concerned, were present.

At the commencement of the proceedings, the servant identified Jacquot as the companion of the boy whom she persisted in calling the

thief. Interrogated by the president as to his name, his age, his country, he had answered with perfect self-possession and coolness. But it was remarked that whenever he turned in the direction of Victor, he carefully avoided looking him in the face.

"So, then, you did not perceive the louis-d'or lying on the bureau?" continued the president.

"No," answered Jacquot.

"Were you at any time alone in the room?"

"No; my comrade or the servant was there the whole time."

"The witness herself admitted that she went in and out; and as to your comrade, he could not be, at one and the same time, in the chimney sweeping it, and with you in the room."

"I was never alone in the room."

"Why, when you came to the street, did you quit your companion so abruptly?"

"Because I had to go on a message."

"Did you tell him so?"

"I do not remember that I did."

"Had you any money about you? and how much?"

"Fifteen or twenty sous, I believe."

"You must have had more; for that very day you bought a jacket and trousers."

"I made an exchange of those I had."

"People do not usually give new things for old; how much to boot did you give?"

"Not much—a mere trifle."

"Why were you so anxious to change your clothes?"

"I was not particularly anxious."

"How were you employed all the rest of the day?"

"In going errands in different parts of the town."

"And where were you that night?"

"That night! I am sure I do not know. I suppose I went home to bed."

"No, you were seen in the theatre."

"Very likely."

"But first you had dined at a tavern in the Barriere de Charenton?"

"Yes, with some friends who invited me to dine there."

"Was there not a louis-d'or changed to pay the reckoning?"

"Well; and if there were, what would that

prove? It was not I who changed it. I defy any one to say it was I."

"It matters little whether it were you or some one else. A new louis-d'or was changed."

An exclamation escaped from Lisette where she stood. The president ordered the crier to enforce silence. Jacquot appeared confused and agitated. The president went on—

"Where did you pass the night of the second of January?"

"In my bed, at old Bourry's, where I lodge."

Bourry, who was now called up, deposed that Jacquot had not made his appearance that night at his house, nor, for the last two months. He at first thought he was dead, but some others of the same trade, who were also his lodgers, told him that Jacquot was become very rich, and grown so proud, that he would not look at them when they met him in the street; that he had changed his name, and was called nothing now but Monsieur Antoine. "And I knew it to be he from this very thing," added the old man; "for he was always a proud fellow, and looking after nothing but amusements—idle and lazy. So that I must own I was famously astonished when I heard that he," pointing to Victor, "was

in prison, and this chap out of it. If I had been asked which of the two would go first, I should not have guessed the right one, that is certain. So you see the wisest may be mistaken."

"You considered Victor, then, to be an honest lad?"

"That I did, Mr President; and I am not the only one. His sister and he bore the best of characters with all the neighbours."

The president now addressed Jacquot—"The informations that have been laid before me, your equivocation, the persons whose associate you are, the life you have been leading for the last two months, the money you laid out the very day of the robbery, are strong presumptive proofs against you. But I have here testimony not to be questioned to the innocence of the admirable young creature who was so near being condemned for a crime I have now little doubt was committed by you. This letter I received two days ago, and I will now read it for the court:—

'SIR—By a happy circumstance, for which I must ever be thankful, the "Police Report" of Tuesday, the 2d of March, has fallen into my hands; and I have

seen in it the examination of a little chimney-sweeper accused of theft. A louis-d'or was found upon him, which he states to have been given him in mistake by a lady on New-Year's Day, for having opened the door of her carriage. This statement is perfectly true. I am that lady. Before I saw the boy, I had been making some purchases, and it was not till I got home that I perceived the loss of the louis-d'or. I supposed I had dropped it when opening my purse to pay for what I had bought. I had intended it as a New-Year's gift to one of my children, and I now thought that Providence had made a much better disposal of it; and that, instead of being expended in useless trifles, it had in all probability gladdened the hearts of some poor family. I little imagined that my mistake was near leading to consequences so fatal to this fine young creature. His strict integrity has deeply affected me. Will you, sir, have the goodness to tell him from me, that the louis-d'or is now indeed his own, and that I feel honoured in asking his acceptance of it, as some poor compensation for all the suffering of which I have been the unconscious and involuntary cause?—I have the honour to be,

FANNY G——.'"

"The dear lady! the good lady!" exclaimed Lisette, clasping her hands in thankful joy.

Victor uttered not a word: he felt that, had he attempted to speak, he must have burst into tears, so exhausted were his spirits by continued painful excitement.

This time it was not against Victor that the prosecutor summed up the evidence. The president then spoke, and showed how human judgment is liable to error, and dwelt at considerable length on the necessity for extreme caution in deciding upon circumstantial evidence, when upon that decision depended the future career of some young creature, whose character, whose whole life, might be blighted for ever. He exhorted Jacquot to profit by the noble example of integrity which his comrade had set him, and to reform before it was too late.

The effrontery of Jacquot had disappeared—he was weeping. Victor approached and held out his hand, but he refused to take it.

"Leave me! All is at an end between us."

"No, no; all is not over between us. I will go see you, and speak to you about our own dear village; and we will still be friends, Jacquot—friends as before."

"Oh yes, we shall all be happy," cried Lisette—"so happy!" she was about to add, "now that Victor is once more free;" but she remembered that Jacquot was no longer free, and she checked herself.

She rested not till Victor was actually out of

court; she was longing for him to breathe the open air, to see him in the street, to walk by his side. Could she ever be unhappy again?

A new chapter opens in the history of Victor Jarnac and his sister Lisette. We have traced them from their infancy in Auvergne—seen how they struggled, amidst pains and sorrows, to earn a livelihood in Paris—and rejoiced to know that they had the good principle and the courage to resist temptation to err. We have also seen how, by dint of perseverance and a love for learning, they had taught themselves to read, which is the beginning of knowledge.

A few months had elapsed since the scene at the trial had occurred, and Victor was still engaged in his miserable profession, when one day he was employed to sweep a chimney in the house of M. Canou, a celebrated machinist. Here, in one of the apartments which he had occasion to pass through, he observed a boy of his own age crying bitterly over his slate. In

youth, distinction of rank is little regarded, and Victor addressed the boy in a tone of sympathy.

"Pardon, young master," said the little sweep; "I am sorry to see you crying. What is the matter? Can I help you?"

"Papa has given me a difficult question in arithmetic to work out before he returns, and I cannot do it."

"But that should not make you cry. Try again, and perhaps you will succeed."

"It is impossible. I don't understand it. And papa has said that unless I can show him the whole question plainly done on the slate, he will not take me along with him to-morrow to see the grand water-works at Versailles."

"Let me see what kind of a question it is," said Victor.

The boy gladly offered him the slate. The little sweep laid aside his brush, worked out the question in five minutes, and immediately went up the chimney, where his voice was soon heard ringing from the top.

When Victor came down, black and sooty, M. Canou, the master of the house, who had come home in the interval, had discovered the

whole transaction, and was waiting his appearance.

"So I see you can count?" said he to the somewhat terrified Victor.

"Yes, a little, sir."

"Who taught you?"

"I learned partly myself, and partly was taught by an old schoolmaster who lives next lodging to ours."

"Ours!—Are there any more of the same family?"

"Only my sister Lisette and myself; that is all. We have lived together ever since coming from Auvergne."

"You come from Auvergne? If that be the case, you will be able to tell me the names of some of the places there. Which is the chief town?"

"Clermont."

"And the high mountain near it?"

"The Puy de Dome."

"And the village with the hot springs at the foot of it?"

"Royat; there I have been many a time."

"And the large table-shaped hill on the other side of Clermont?"

"Gergovia; there I once went with Uncle Guillaume—he who goes as a guide with gentlemen to the mountains."

"It is all right, my little fellow," said M. Canou, much pleased. "I see you are a true Auvergnese. I know Guillaume the guide. Now tell me if you would not like to abandon chimney-sweeping, and take to a better line of business?"

"With all my heart, sir; but I am a poor boy, without any friends but Lisette."

"How much do you earn a month?"

"From ten to thirty francs."

"Well, if you will come to assist me in my affairs, I will give you at first sixty francs, and perhaps a hundred francs afterwards, if you give me satisfaction."

"Thank you, thank you, sir; I accept your offer with joy. Oh how happy will Lisette be to hear of this!"

Next day, by the orders of M. Canou, Victor, after being washed, was dressed in a new suit of clothes, and transferred to a lodging suitable to his new station in life. Lisette shared in this favourable turn of fortune; and by the kindness of Madame Canou, was restored

to the decencies of her sex. When left to themselves after these transformations, so sudden and unexpected, the brother and sister threw themselves into each other's arms and wept a flood of tears. They were tears of happiness.

M. Canou was one of those men who discover genius in humble stations of life, and encourage it for the advantages it yields to them. He was impatient of dunces, and loved to be surrounded by lads of bright understanding. His business required much calculation in figures. In his office were to be seen several young men seated at tables, each with a drawing-board before him, and busy with pencils and compasses. Clever in apprehension, and fortified by habits of self-reliance, Victor soon became a useful assistant in the establishment, in which his obliging disposition gained him friends. In a short time his salary was raised to a hundred francs each month, which is equal to a pound per week; and in twelve months it was made two hundred francs.

While Victor was rising in the esteem of his employer, Lisette was taking lessons in some useful branches of education, which we shall immediately see were not thrown away.

Madame Gerond had often spoken to her children of the honest sweep and his sister Lisette; and the story of the louis-d'or was again and again repeated.

"I wonder, mamma," said her eldest daughter Julie one day—"I wonder you never did anything for them, considering how shocking a trade chimney-sweeping is."

"I have been thinking of that," replied Madame Gerond; "and wish we could discover where Victor Jarnac and his sister are to be found."

"Let us inquire at the commissary of police; some of his people may know."

"A good idea; we shall to-day make all proper inquiries, and hope that the little Auvergnese may cast up."

The police were not long in making Madame Gerond acquainted with the new residence and employment of Victor and his sister. The account of the interview may be passed over; it is enough to say that the pretty Lisette was removed in the first place to an establishment for education at Passy, and afterwards was engaged to take charge of Madame Gerond's younger children. What a new cause of happi-

ness—to be placed in the way of earning a respectable livelihood like her brother! Lisette was receiving the merited reward of virtue!

Meanwhile, Victor was rising in the estimation of his employer. For a length of time he had devoted every spare hour to education, and had become a proficient in mathematical science. At the end of six years, M. Canou relinquished his business to his son, in connection with Victor Jarnac; and from this time our hero—always prudent and economical—rapidly rose in wealth and position; nor should we omit to mention that he did what was proper in the way of assisting his poor relatives in Auvergne. After being in company with young M. Canou for four years, circumstances occurred which led Victor to change his profession, in order to devote himself to the business of finance. Gradually, toilsomely, but hopefully—oh blessed hope, when associated with virtue!—had the once poor boy risen to his present eminence. God, however, had destined that he should ascend one step more!

The brilliant wedding of M. Victor Jarnac and Mademoiselle de P—— will long be remembered in Paris. The bridegroom was one of the richest bankers in the city; the bride the only daughter of the Marquis de P——, a peer of France, and formerly an ambassador. It is but a few winters since this marriage was celebrated with the utmost pomp at the chapel of the Palais de Luxembourg, as well as at the magnificent mansion of M. Jarnac. But the strange and charming episode which distinguished the festival from all others of the kind, and which procured for the bridegroom a reputation of unqualified originality in the banking circles, deserves to be particularly noticed.

The wedding morning had arrived. M. Jarnac's equipages were waiting for him in the courtyard, and he was himself anxiously awaiting his bridesmen in a richly-embellished saloon, when a footman announced, "The tailors who were ordered to attend;" and so saying, he ushered into the apartment ten tailors, each

carrying a packet under his arm, and all, from the oddity of the circumstance, with a smile on their countenances. These ten tailors brought fifty suits of clothes, adapted for fifty Auvergnese sweeps of every size, from eight to fourteen years of age, and laid them down on the brilliant damask furniture of the saloon.

M. Jarnac examined carefully this collection of jackets, waistcoats, and trousers; declared himself quite satisfied; and paid for the articles with a bag of five thousand francs which lay before him on the table. When the tailors had retired in amazement of the whole proceeding, there were next introduced hat-makers with fifty caps, haberdashers with fifty shirts, and shoemakers with fifty pairs of sabots or wooden shoes. All departed, praising the banker's liberality, but much perplexed with the nature of his purchases. Some thought they must have been procured in accomplishment of a wager; others that they were prepared for some mystification which was to take place during the approaching marriage fête.

M. Jarnac now sent for some of his clerks, and spoke to them as follows:—

"You will be so good as to go directly into

the divers quarters of the town, and invite every sweep who may come across your path to dine with me. You are to promise a louis-d'or to each one who may accept the invitation, and when you have collected fifty, bring them here without delay. In my bath-room has been prepared all that is needful to scour them well from head to foot. That operation ended, you will make them dress themselves in these clothes, each according to his size, and let them sit down to table in this saloon, while our other guests are at dinner in the adjoining hall. You will also take care to have a musical band ready to play at the proper time when a signal is given."

The clerks looked half bewildered; begged for a repetition of the order, that they might be sure it was not a dream; and set about its execution, quite unable to guess what could have originated so singular a whim.

It was a bitterly cold winter's morning; a fall of snow had been succeeded by a hard frost; a few faint rays of sunshine lighted up the icicles which hung from the eaves, without having the power to melt them. It was a time which called for a fire on every hearth—a time

just fitted to give full employment to chimney-sweeps. M. Jarnac's messengers had no difficulty in finding plenty of the poor little fellows crying at the top of their voices—

> "Chimneys low, and chimneys steep,
> Sweep we clean, quite clean we sweep—
> Chimneys low, and chimneys steep!"

Others were singing on the roofs, or from the tops of the chimneys; whilst some were sweeping the snow, and crying, in a beseeching tone, to every passer-by, "A sou, one little sou, dear, kind sir!" until the "little sou" stopped their intreaties; for none know better than the Auvergnese how to exercise the power of importunity. Imagine, then, the astonishment of the little creatures when, instead of receiving a sou, they were promised a louis-d'or on the single condition of attending a wedding dinner! The good news spread from one chimney top to another like a telegraphic despatch; and in less than two hours there was hardly a sweep to be met with in the Place Maubert or Rue Guévin Boisseau. As far as they were concerned, the chimneys might all, for this day at least, take fire as they pleased.

Having only to choose among the crowd that

offered themselves, the banker's messengers resolutely took the most dingy and ragged of the tribe; and when they made their entrée into the elegant hotel of M. Victor Jarnac, one may imagine their astonishment. The scene was so much the more striking, that the sable party happened to arrive at the same moment as the train of carriages which conveyed the bridal party back from the Luxembourg.

On the one side were gold and silver liveries, dresses of silk and velvet, the most elegant men and women in Paris; on the other, faces covered with soot and smoke, tangled hair, and bodies only partially clothed in tattered garments. Whilst the gay and brilliant guests cast glances of inquiring surprise upon this extraordinary spectacle, M. Jarnac pensively fixed his eyes for a moment upon the Auvergnese, and sighed. It seemed as if the sight had awakened within him some remembrance of the past; but the present soon regained its ascendancy, and turning with a happy smile to his lovely bride, he led her as a queen into her palace—not forgetting, however, to remind his servants by a sign that they should pay all due attention to the poor little sweeps. An hour afterwards, a

stream as black as ink might be seen flowing through the court into the street gutter: it was the cleaning of the fifty sweeps, who were at the same moment emerging from their bath, so much the more fair and fresh that they were literally in *new* skins, which for many a year at least had never been exposed to either air or sun.

The hour for the banquet had arrived. A thousand gilded lamps lighted up the gorgeous mansion. The guests, after passing through a suite of apartments, decorated with all the splendour which a millionaire could command, entered the dining hall, where they were soon seated at a banquet as exquisite and recherché in its arrangements as the culinary genius of a Chevet could devise. The apparition of the chimney-sweeps had been almost forgotten, when, on the sudden withdrawal of the wide folding-doors, the adjoining saloon was exposed to view. It was, like the dining apartment, brilliantly lighted, and furnished with a splendid banquet, which was also surrounded with its circle of joyous guests. One might have supposed this festive scene to be the creation of a fairy's wand. At the sight of this double fes-

tivity, a general exclamation of surprise escaped from every lip. M. Jarnac and his wife alone were silent, and exchanged a smile of intelligence.

The dirty little sweeps of the morning were soon recognised by the guests, who could hardly believe their eyes at the change which had been effected in their appearance. They now looked the prettiest little fellows in the world, all clad in new jackets, sabots, and caps; and some of them, in the excess of their joy, were dancing and singing about the room to the music which had struck up. It was a bright vision of youthful happiness, such as is rarely to be met with. M. Jarnac tenderly pressed the hand of his bride, while a tear glistened in his eye.

"My friends," said he, addressing his richer guests, "pardon me this fancy. Feeling myself to be this day the happiest of mankind, I was desirous of sharing my joy with the most unfortunate."

This noble explanation met with general applause; but still a suspicion lurked in every mind that as yet a corner of the veil only had been raised, and that some further explanation was yet in store for them. But in the mean-

time, the guests, great and little, applied themselves with the utmost assiduity to the business in hand. The little ones, especially, seemed as if determined to compensate themselves in one hour for all the days of fasting which had marked their short life; but being under the eye of some careful valets, they were not permitted to abuse this abundance by excess. At length, when they had pretty nearly had their fill, M. Victor Jarnac rose in the midst of the most profound silence.

"Well, my children," said he in a kind voice to the young Auvergnese, "have I attained my object? Are you happy?"

The children responded with a joyous unanimity, which left no doubt upon the matter.

"We have been amused. . . . for our *whole lives!*" exclaimed one of the elder boys, unconscious how mournful in *fact* was such a declaration.

"Not for your whole lives!" replied the banker; "for you also may be happy yourselves, and in your turn bestow pleasure upon others. I will prove it to you by relating a simple narrative, showing how a sweep became a *millionaire!*"

At this electric word the hundred little ears were all attention, and M. Jarnac continued—"Yes, my young friends, it depends upon yourselves alone to be happy; for happiness is seldom denied to those who, by their moral and intellectual qualities, aim to attain it. The misfortune only is, that few have the resolution to withstand petty temptations to err; few have the fortitude to persevere with patience and hope in the performance of their appointed duty. Listen to the tale of a person who was once as poor as you are—one who was for a time without home or hearth. The lesson it contains may be of more value than a wedding banquet."

Victor Jarnac now gave a brief and graphic history of his origin and early struggles: how he departed from Auvergne with his twin-sister Lisette—how they were sometimes at the brink of starvation—how they were saved during the terrible snow storm: then he spoke of their arrival in Paris—their privations and attachment — their resolution in overcoming evil temptations—his escape from an unjust prosecution for alleged theft—how he had been lifted from his condition of a sweep by the kindness of M. Canou—and how his dear sister had also

been raised to a respectable rank in life. He concluded by noticing his recent career, and the good fortune which had attended him. "And now," said he, "such is the unvarnished history of my life. I have been relating no romance; everything I have said is true; and here is an undeniable proof beside me on my left—here is my dear sister Lisette!"

The saloon rung with shouts of applause. All rose, high and low, in one simultaneous movement, and clapped their hands in an ecstacy of delight. The cry resounded through the hall, "Long live the noble Victor Jarnac, who has not disdained to recall the fact of his early struggles: long live Lisette, the twin companion of his heroism!"

Lisette was overcome with emotion, and buried her face, suffused in tears, in the bosom of her beloved brother.

When the sensation had subsided, M. Jarnac again addressed the company on the events of the present day; his gratitude to Providence for His wonderful and undeserved care; and the earthly happiness which had been crowned by his union with the lady on his right, the daughter of the Marquis de P——.

"And this happiness also he owes to himself alone!" nobly exclaimed his newly-married wife, as she affectionately held out her hand to her husband.

This public avowal of M. Jarnac, which was not new either to his wife or his intimate friends, had been made with so much dignity and good taste, that his proudest guests felt it an honour to grasp the hand of the former chimney-sweep; and the voice of the peers of France blended with that of the Auvergnese in one common acclamation.

"And now, my friends," continued the banker, "before I dismiss you, I must show you the instruments of my fortune."

The whole party followed M. Jarnac into his cabinet. Here he opened a massive cupboard of elegantly-carved walnut wood, and exposed to view, in one of the compartments, a chimney-sweep's costume, a stuffed bird, and a pair of sabots; and in another compartment were drawing-boards, compasses, and various mathematical instruments. Among these articles, the stuffed bird, which was kept under glass, excited the most curiosity and attention. It was all that remained of poor Jocrise,

the hawk, which had performed not an unimportant part in the history that had just been related. Shortly after Victor had been installed in the employment of M. Canou, and was able to support and give accommodation to a bird, he had sent to purchase Jocrise from its owner, and it was handsomely returned to him as a gift. At its death, which was much lamented, its skin had been stuffed in gratitude of its services. And this circumstance, as much perhaps as anything else, showed the affectionateness of Victor's disposition.

When all had satisfied their curiosity, M. Jarnac, in closing the doors of the cabinet, observed, "Such, my young friends, are the instruments by which I at first made my way in the world; but there were four other instruments which cannot be locked up like articles of curiosity—these were PERSEVERANCE, ECONOMY, TRUTH, AND TRUST IN GOD! Whatever be your destiny, let these at least be held by you in perpetual remembrance."

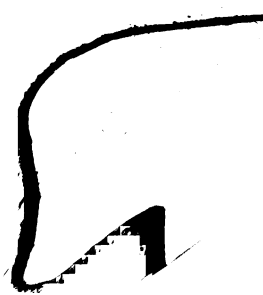
Thus saying, he placed in the hand of each child a louis-d'or, and a note for five hundred francs on the savings' bank. A cry of joy was

uttered on the receipt of the unexpected splendour of the donation.

"Take that as a gift," said M. Jarnac; "and let me find that you are worthy of my notice. I shall employ one of my clerks to discover, from time to time, how you are conducting yourselves, and whether your accounts at the savings' bank are increasing."

All retired in a state of feeling which it would be difficult to describe. The whole affair was so strange—the attentions so gracious—the gift so munificent. It is stated that few of these poor children proved undeserving of their good fortune. Some are engaged at different trades; some have gone home rich to their native hills; and the greater number bid fair to become useful and respectable members of society.

THE END.



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